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Amir Theilhaber
Friedrich Rosen

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Friedrich Rosen

Orientalist Scholarship and International Politics

DE GRUYTER
OLDENBOURG

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Introduction

Ich habe euch meinen Rat gespendet
Mein Leben hab' ich darauf verwendet
Und nehmt ihr meine Botschaft nicht an,
Der Bote hat doch seine Pflicht getan.
Gulistan by Muslih ed-Din 'Abdallah Sa'di, 1258.

Translated in *Ratgeber für den Umgang mit Menschen* by Friedrich Rosen, 1921.¹

A few days into his short-lived term as German foreign minister in 1921, the *Vossische Zeitung* reviewed Friedrich Rosen's translation of the eighth book of Sa'di's *Gulistan* in an article entitled "Intercourse with humans. Minister Rosen as interpreter of Persian people". The liberal newspaper noted that it was a novel phenomenon in German politics that a statesman "was so to speak a savant, or even suspected of poetic inclinations". In earlier years, an interest of a politician in the "far away wonder and fairy-tale world of the Orient" would have evoked merely head-shaking, but the democratic revolution of 1918 had brought to the fore a character who had more to say about humanity than other politicians or diplomats. What that would mean for politics remained to be seen:

Alle die aber, die sich von dem politischen Jammer des Abendlandes mit Schauer abwenden und gern den Blick nach Osten lenken, sich in die tröstlich-fatalistische Weisheit des Morgenlandes versenken und lieber an dem ewig lebendigen Quell orientalischer Kulturen sich laben, als an dem mählich versiegenden Bronnen europäischer Zivilisation, werden es angenehm empfinden, zu wissen, daß das außenpolitische Steuer des Reichs von der Hand eines Mannes gelenkt wird, der mit Hafis, Saadi und Omar Khajjam groß geworden und mit diesen erlauchten Geistern östlicher Dichtung auch heute noch vertrauten Umgang pflegt.²

1 "I have bestowed my advice onto you – My life I have devoted to it – And if you will not accept my message, the messenger has still done his duty." Friedrich Rosen, trans. and ed., *Der Ratgeber für den Umgang mit Menschen. Achtes Buch des Gulistan nebst einigen anderen Stücken von Muslih ed din Saadi aus Shiras 1189 – 1291* (Berlin: Georg Stilke, 1921), 142; Mohammad Ali Forughī, ed., *Kolliyāt-e Sa'di. Muslih ed-Din Sa'di [in Persian]* (Tehran: Hermes, 2007), 302.

2 "But for all those, who turn from the sorrow of the Occident with a shudder and are inclined to direct their view eastward, who plunge into the solaceful-fatalistic wisdom of the Orient and rather feast on the eternally alive source of Oriental culture than on the gradually drying up well of European civilisation, they will feel comforted to know that the foreign political rudder of the Reich is in the hands of a man, who grew up with Hafez, Sa'di and Omar Khayyam and still today consorts intimately with these august spirits of Eastern poetry." Richard Dyck, "Umgang mit Menschen. Minister Rosen als Dolmetsch persischer Dichtung," *Vossische Zeitung* 242 (26 May 1921): 2.

The appointment of the non-partisan Friedrich Rosen to the position of foreign minister by chancellor Joseph Wirth in his coalition of centrist parties generally evoked a positive echo in the German press. Other liberal newspapers thought the professional diplomat to be the most suitable appointment, a man of compromise and even-handedness who was qualified for the position by more than 30 years of diplomatic service.³ His curriculum vitae, printed in most articles in the German and international press, listed Rosen as having entered the German foreign service first as a dragoman (administrative interpreter-translator) in Beirut (1890), followed by positions as dragoman and chargé d'affaires in Tehran (1891–1898), consul in Baghdad (1898), consul-general in Jerusalem (1899–1900), and then head of the Orient desk (1900–1905) of the Auswärtiges Amt (German foreign office). Rosen's career was a rise from Oriental obscurity to the inner circles of German power. After finding some notice in the international press as the head of a special mission to Addis Ababa that established diplomatic relations between Germany and Ethiopia (1905), it were his years as envoy in Tangier (1905–1910) that saw the association of Rosen's name with Germany's more assertive Orient politics. A two-year stint as envoy in Bucharest (1910–1912) marked Rosen's departure from the Orient. As envoy in Lisbon (1912–1916) Rosen first attempted to come to an agreement with England over Portugal's African colonies, and then tried to keep Portugal out of the war. After Germany's declaration of war against Portugal in 1916, Rosen proved more successful in preserving Dutch neutrality and cultivating amicable German-Dutch relations (1916–1921).⁴ The liberal press in particular lauded Rosen's resistance against the ultimatum politics of the German army, and its stranglehold on politics during the war. The *Frankfurter Zeitung* speculated that it would have been to Germany's benefit had the elderly Rosen been appointed foreign minister ten years earlier. He would have “warded off the insane over-straining of the power-political tendencies”, the paper surmised.⁵ Rosen's ripe age of 65 was pointed out in most newspapers and explained by his Orient scholarship and his non-noble burgher background impeding his career advancement.⁶

3 “Reichsminister Dr. Rosen,” *Frankfurter Zeitung* 376 (24 May 1921); “Dr. Rosens diplomatische Laufbahn. Die Personalveränderung im Reichsministerium,” *Berliner Tageblatt* 238 (23 May 1921); “Die Beurteilung des neuen Außenministers Dr. Rosen. Hoffnungen und Erwartungen,” *Weser Zeitung* 351 (24 May 1921).

4 “Hail Rosen's Appointment. Germans Laud Selection as Foreign Minister, but French Are Displeased,” *New York Times*, 25 May 1921, 2.

5 “Reichsminister Dr. Rosen.”

6 “Beurteilung des neuen Außenministers.”

Critical voices were uttered in France, where Rosen was called “the diplomat of the Kaiser” for his role in working against the French annexation of Morocco before the war, and blamed in a number of newspapers across the political spectrum for orchestrating Germany’s Morocco policy, including the Agadir Crisis of 1911, even though Rosen was by then no longer in Morocco or involved in Orient politics.⁷ The liberal-conservative *Kölnische Zeitung* reported that Rosen’s “diplomatic experience and foreign policy knowledge was ... downright astonishing” and that the negative responses in the French press were only reinforcing the view that Rosen would be the right person to wrestle for Germany.⁸ In much of the French press the Kaiser’s diplomat was supposedly a “pangermanist”, his republican credentials just as fake as his pacifist stance; an unexorcised devil in disguise who had proven himself in the past to be the “most intrepid and systematic *mangeur de Français*”.⁹ More moderate newspapers also doubted that Rosen’s appointment would signal better Franco-German relations in the aftermath of the Versailles Treaty.¹⁰ An op-ed in *The New York Times* by the Palestine archaeologist Frederick Jones Bliss emphasised that Rosen’s charm and culture would render him and his country good services, highlighting that his grandfather was the famed pianist Ignaz Moscheles, and his uncle the painter and president of the International Arbitration and Peace Association and of the London Esperanto Club, Felix Moscheles. Underneath the appraisal of Rosen, the editors thought it necessary to remind readers that “Unfortunately, it must be added that Dr. Rosen’s diverse talents were put to a somewhat unhappy use in 1905 and 1906, when he was the Kaiser’s chief instrument in Morocco. The type of diplomacy there exhibited is hardly the sort of thing that will make

7 “‘Der Diplomat des Kaisers,’” *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* 210 (26 May 1921); “De Fransche pers over de benoeming van Rosen,” *De Telegraaf* 11.205 (25 May 1921): 1; “Ce que dit la presse. Le docteur Rosen,” *Le Petit Journal* 21.317 (28 May 1921): 3; “Le docteur Rosen,” *L’Action Française* 149 (29 May 1921): 4.

8 “Der neue Reichsminister des Auswärtigen. Dr. Friedrich Rosen,” *Kölnische Zeitung* 369 (24 May 1921).

9 “Des nos mœurs politiques,” *L’Action Française* 150 (30 May 1921): 1; “La presse. Rosen”; “Le Dr Rosen,” *L’Information* 149 (29 May 1921); “Après le Dr. Rosen. M. Walther-Rathenau serait ministre de la reconstruction,” *L’Action Française* 146 (26 May 1921): 3; “Vredesonderhandelingen. De geallieerden en de O. S. quaestie. Fransche berichten,” *Algemeen Handelsblad* 30246 (28 May 1921): 1.

10 “Le cas du Dr Rosen,” *L’Action Française* 158 (28 May 1921): 1; “Rosen”; Marcel Ray, “L’Action concertée des alliés en Haut-Silésie. M. Briand convoque l’ambassadeur d’Allemagne et lui remet une note comminatoire,” *Le Petit Journal* 21.313 (24 May 1921): 1; “Le grand débat de politique extérieure s’est poursuivi hier à la Chambre,” *Le Petit Parisien* 16.158 (26 May 1921): 1.

friends for the German Republic.”¹¹ In the Dutch press, the *Kölnische Zeitung* could detect “no unfriendly or even critical word”, with Rosen praised for his intimate knowledge of the Netherlands and Dutch sensitivities during and after the war. A few months earlier the Dutch historian Nicolaas Japiske had published a book based on the accounts of Dutch statesmen that saw Rosen carefully working with Dutch politicians and the German Kaiser in preventing the German military leadership from orchestrating a declaration of war against the Netherlands in the spring of 1918. The *Algemeen Handelsblad* noted that when Rosen was sent to the Netherlands in 1916 “certain circles of the Wilhelmstraße [seat of the Auswärtiges Amt and the chancellery in Berlin] had ridiculed the choice of the ‘Eastern poet’. But during the war Dr. Rosen showed that he was a better diplomat than these mockers.”¹² From Iran the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* reported that Rosen was still fondly remembered in the country as someone who “encountered the Iranian Wesen [nature/character] with understanding”. In the winter of 1917/8, the rump Iranian government had tried to entice the German government to send Rosen as envoy to Tehran to help stabilise the political situation.¹³

While most right-wing newspapers in Germany did not voice opposition to Rosen, “only the vulgar part of the *Alldeutsche* [pangermanist and colonialist] press attacked the minister, because of his Jewish family relations”, as the *Frankfurter Zeitung* observed. The conservative *Neue Preußische (Kreuz-)Zeitung* had agitated against Rosen as a “Jewified diplomat” a year earlier.¹⁴ Rosen was in

11 Frederick Jones Bliss, “New German Foreign Minister,” *New York Times*, 24 July 1921, 26.

12 “Dr. Rosen in holländischer Beleuchtung,” *Kölnische Zeitung* 379 (27 May 1921); Nicolaas Japiske, *Die Stellung Hollands im Weltkrieg politisch und wirtschaftlich*, trans. K. Schwendemann (Gotha: F. A. Perthes, 1921), 163; “Het department van buitenlandsche zaken,” *Algemeen Handelsblad* 30242 (24 May 1921): 2; “Deutschland. De nieuw minister van buitenlandsch beleid,” *Limburger koerier* 120 (25 May 1921); “Deutschland. De nieuwe minister van buitenlandsche zaken,” *Voorwaarts* 254 (24 May 1921): 1.

13 “Dr. Rosen Außenminister,” *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* 235 (23 May 1921).

14 The anti-semitic publications – from which the French press picked up that Rosen had “Jewish blood in his veins” – were not the only discussions of Rosen’s character, career and allegiances that were not steeped in fact. The placing of Rosen in relation to the Agadir Crisis and as a lackey of Kaiser Wilhelm II in connection with French sabre-rattling were just another two instances. Friendly articles moreover falsely cited Rosen as consul in the Persian coastal town of Bushehr in 1897, as having guided the Kaiser through Jerusalem in 1898 and thus bringing the lowly consul into the circles of the court, as envoy in Buenos Aires, negotiating at Algeciras, and as envoy in Tehran in 1908. They also falsely attributed books Rosen’s father had written to him and said that his wife Nina was a daughter of Ignaz Moscheles when she was in fact his grand-daughter. A common mistake at the time was to elevate Rosen to nobility. Rosen intermittently absorbed the baronships of the Russian diplomat Roman Rosen and the Russian Indologist Viktor Rosen. Some of these falsehoods had entered the public discourse in the early 1900s

fact a grand-son of the pianist Ignaz Moscheles on his mother's side, but the Prague-born pianist had been baptised in the Anglican Church before 1830 and in the bourgeois family Judaism or Jewishness did not play a role surpassing the interests in other religions or cultures.¹⁵ Elected chairman of the Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft, the main Orientalist scholarly association in Germany, shortly before in the spring of 1921, fellow Iranists such as the eminent Edward Granville Browne of Cambridge also took note of Rosen's appointment: one of their guild had become foreign minister in Germany!¹⁶ The main reservation of German newspapers and other sceptics was if Rosen, having spent most of his life outside of Germany, would be able to operate effectively as foreign minister of a government subject to the dealings of party politics.¹⁷

Rosen would conclude Germany's peace treaty with the United States later that summer and resign with the entire cabinet in the autumn of 1921 over the partition of Upper Silesia under Franco-British pressure.¹⁸ Shortly after, Rosen vented his frustration over his short term in office to his friend Friedrich Carl Andreas – the founder of Iranian studies at Göttingen University – in a letter that deserves to be quoted at some length:

Meine hiesige Tätigkeit als Außenminister stellte den Versuch dar, ob es möglich wäre, in unseren gegenwärtigen Verhältnissen – äußeren und namentlich inneren – auf Grund von Erfahrung und methodischer Arbeit noch irgend etwas für unser Land zu leisten. Dies hat sich indessen auf die Dauer als undurchführbar erwiesen, nicht allein wegen der fortgesetzten Intrigen, denen jeder auf beneideten Posten Stehende immer ausgesetzt ist, sondern hauptsächlich wegen der jetzigen uneingeschränkten Herrschaft des Dilettantismus von

and were unintentioned. Some are traceable to concrete political instances of imperial rivalries affecting the reliability of reporting. Others still were concocted as part of the propaganda war effort or in search for scapegoats in the war's aftermath. "Beurteilung des neuen Außenministers"; "Reichsminister Dr. Rosen"; "Cas du Rosen"; Cyril Brown, "Rosen Facetious on Peace Resolution. German Foreign Minister Understands Congress Can Play with It for 37 1/2 Years," *New York Times*, 17 June 1921, 2; August Schacht, "Der 'semitische' Dr. Rosen," *Lippische Landeszeitung*, February 1920; Robert L. Owen, *The Russian Imperial Conspiracy. 1892–1914* (New York: Albert and Charles Boni, 1927), 137.

15 Henry Charles Bell, 11 April 1833, Extract from Baptism Register, 4017, Personalakten 12583, PA AA .

16 "Aus gelehrten Gesellschaften," *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung* 24, no. 1/2 (1921): 45; Edward Granville Browne, 23 May 1921, "Black Diary," 47, 48 Browne Papers, CUL Manuscripts.

17 "Reichsminister Dr. Rosen"; "Rosen Außenminister"; "Dr. Rosen Außenminister," *Vossische Zeitung* 237 (23 May 1921); "Neuer Reichsminister."

18 Brown, "Rosen Facetious on Peace Resolution"; Mark Ellis Swartzburg, "The Call for America: German-American Relations and the European Crisis, 1921–1924/5" (PhD diss., University of North Carolina, 2005), 53–71.

Ungebildeten und dem noch viel schlimmeren von Halbgebildeten. Mit diesen kann ein Mann von meiner Art nicht dieselbe Sprache reden. Man spricht und denkt an einander vorbei, denn man findet bei den neuen Männern nur Sinn für das grob Materielle und unter Umständen auch für das Sensationelle, nicht aber für das Sachliche und für die feineren Zusammenhänge der Dinge. Unsere Zeit ist der Tag anderer als ich es nun einmal bin. Sie ist der Tag der Volksredner, der Demagogen, der Wiederholer von Schlagwörtern. Sie ist der Tag der Interessenverbände und der Parteicliquen... Auf die Sache selbst, auf die Qualität seiner Arbeit kommt es nicht an, von ihr ist überhaupt nicht die Rede, an sie wird gar nicht gedacht. Die neue Richtung im Kabinett steuert einer Liebedienerei gegenüber Frankreich, mit anderen Worten dem völligen Niedergange oder Untergange zu. Ich könnte diese Richtung nicht mitmachen und bin im innersten Herzen froh, daß ich auf anständige Weise ausscheiden konnte.¹⁹

Rosen's letter to Andreas did not show the deep disappointment he experienced with his inability to make his pro-British reputation and inclinations count in his interactions with the British ambassador Edgar D'Abernon in Berlin. D'Abernon found Rosen to have harboured exaggerated expectations of the British in the Upper Silesia and reparations questions, further complicating cooperation.²⁰ The frustration Rosen expressed to his friend did, however, portray his recognition that he was a stranger to democratic party politics, that he lacked a power-base in Germany after his long years of diplomatic service abroad, as well as his failure to operate in an era when secret diplomacy had come under attack as one of the main reasons for the Great War. As the junior diplomat Otto Kiep, who owed his career to Rosen, wrote later:

19 "My occupation here as foreign minister constituted the attempt to see, if it was possible in our current affairs – foreign and namely interior – on the basis of experience and methodic work to still deliver something for our country. However, this has been proven to be infeasible, not only because of the continuing intrigues, which everyone on the envied posts is continuously exposed to, but mainly because of the currently unlimited rule of dilletantism of the uneducated, and even worse the half-educated. A man of my kind cannot speak the same language with them. One talks and thinks past one another, because among the new men there is only sense for the coarse material and occasionally also the sensational, but not for factual and the finer connections of things. Our time is the day for those other than what I am. It is the time for popular speakers, demagogues, the repeaters of keywords. It is the day of interest groups and party cliques... The matter itself, the quality of his work, is of no importance, it is not even discussed, no thought is invested in it. The new direction of the cabinet steers towards cajoling submission to France, so in other words complete demise and doom. I could not participate in this direction and am glad that I could resign in decent way." Friedrich Rosen to F.C. Andreas, 18 November 1921, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG.

20 Angela Kaiser, *Lord D'Abernon und die englische Deutschlandpolitik 1920–1926* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1989), 208; Gaynor Johanson, *The Berlin Embassy of Lord D'Abernon, 1920–1926* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 48.

“Rosen was a diplomat, a poet and philosopher... he lacked every organ, yes every understanding of internal politics and parliamentarianism, as it had developed under the rule of the Weimar constitution. He did not know post-war Berlin – as he had spent the largest part of his life abroad – and had neither connections to the parliament nor to the press and the parties.”²¹

Rosen’s annoyance with the lack of sense for “the factual and finer connections of things”, the preponderance of sensationalism, un- or half-education and demagoguery points back to the poem with which Sa’di had closed his *Gulistan*. In his view, Rosen had given his advice and provided his superior knowledge. While his message was not heard, he believed to have done his duty as a messenger.

The Orient in Scholarship and Politics during German Empire. Research Questions and Theses

In the period after the First World War, Rosen manoeuvred as German envoy in The Hague amid a constellation of conflicting policy objectives: the abdicated Wilhelm II in his Dutch exile, assuring the new German republican government of his loyalty, German royalist agitation, international calls for having the Kaiser expelled and put on trial, the Dutch government’s continuing concern for its neutrality and the rise of Netherland’s post-war economy.²² As a respite Rosen translated from Sa’di’s *Gulistan* the eighth chapter on “rules for conduct in life” from which the epigraph at the outset is quoted. It lends itself to a political interpretation. The quatrain is taken from the close of the *Gulistan*, where Sa’di positioned himself as having devoted his life to being a messenger of advice. With more aloofness than expressed in Rosen’s frustrated letter to Andreas, Sa’di recognised that the task may be futile, but that this did not absolve the messenger from his obligation. Preceded by words of derision for the short-sighted, the unenlightened and his detractors, Sa’di offered his advice to the ruling classes of Persia from a distance, reflecting the potentially deadly consequences

21 Otto Carl Kiep, Hanna Clements, and Hildegard Rauch, eds., *Mein Lebensweg 1886–1944: Aufzeichnungen während der Haft* (Berlin: Lukas, 2013), 86.

22 Friedrich Rosen to Friedrich Ebert, 17 November 1918, ASWPC; Sally Marks, “‘My Name is Ozymandias’ The Kaiser in Exile,” *Central European History* 16, no. 2 (June 1983): 126–45; Marc Frey, “Bullying the Neutrals. The Case of the Netherlands,” in *Great War, Total War. Combat and Mobilization on the Western Front, 1914–1918*, Roger Chickering and Stig Förster (Washington: German Historical Institute, 2000), 241–42.

of falling from grace while in striking distance of the Shah.²³ Informed by his changing fortunes with what Katouzian has called Persia's "arbitrary rulers" and his long life of travelling in the Middle East and India in the thirteenth century, Sa'di conceived of his *Gulistan* as a tool for educating the powerful. He saw himself as the messenger bringing wisdom and knowledge to politics, throughout the work attempting to "stri[k]e the proper balance between the exercise of efficacious power and of enlightened moral authority in political relations", as Lewis notes.²⁴ Another poem of the *Gulistan*, that the *Vossische Zeitung* cited in view of Rosen's ministership, encapsulates the contradiction in terms of infusing power with knowledge:

Willst du, o König, einen Rat anhören,
 Besser als aller Weisheitsbücher Lehren?
 Vertrau' ein Amt nur wahrhaft Weisen an.
 Wenngleich kein Amt begehrt ein weiser Mann.²⁵

Do you, oh king, want to listen to advice,
 better than all teachings in the books of wisdom?
 Entrust a post only to the truly wise,
 albeit no wise man desires a post.

Still, Rosen had devoted his life to what Sa'di had urged in a series of antithetical poems: the worthy and necessary application of knowledge.²⁶ Celebrated in the German press as singularly well-equipped for the position of foreign minister and as the most intellectual politician in Germany since the philosopher Friedrich Ancillon (1767–1837), a retort in the French press drew attention to the lofty ideas of the teacher of the later king Friedrich Wilhelm IV of Prussia having proved inapplicable and even counterproductive for power politics, when Ancillon became Prussian foreign secretary in the 1830s.²⁷ Not only in France doubt

23 Forughī, *Kolliyat-e Sa'di*, 301–2.

24 Homa Katouzian, *The Persians. Ancient, Medieval and Modern Iran* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 166; Franklin Lewis, "Golestān-e Sa'di," *Encyclopædia Iranica* XI, no. 1 (2001): 79–80; Homa Katouzian, *Sa'di. The Poet of Life, Love and Compassion*, Makers of the Muslim World (Oxford: Oneworld, 2006), 29–31, 118–19.

25 "Do you, oh king, want to listen to advice, better than all teachings in the books of wisdom? Entrust a post only to the truly wise, although no wise man desiring a post." Friedrich Rosen, *Saadis Ratgeber*, 37; Dyck, "Umgang mit Menschen."

26 In one of those poems Sa'di belittled purely theoretical knowledge as akin to the donkey who does not know if he is carrying bundles of manuscripts or logs of wood. Friedrich Rosen, *Saadis Ratgeber*, 51.

27 "Reichsminister Rosen"; "Cas du Rosen"; "La presse. Rosen"; Brown, "Rosen Facetious on Peace Resolution."

was cast over whether such Orientalist or any knowledge could deliver Germany and Europe from their malaise.

These questions concerning the relationship of power and knowledge posed by Sa'di in thirteenth century Persia and comprised in some of these post-war nationalist altercations stand at the centre of this study on the interactions of Orientalist scholarship and international politics in the age of German empire. Just as his “diplomatic wandering life” – the title of his German autobiography – led Friedrich Rosen for shorter or longer periods through cultural, religious and socio-economic contexts in over a dozen places across three continents, he traversed and intermingled the realms of politics and scholarship. Rosen's life was marked by his continuous engagement and increasing significance in Orient politics and scholarship during the rise and fall of the German empire – with an afterlife in creative and tormented republican Germany and the Iranian circles of Berlin. This is regardless of whether Rosen should be considered (an) Orientalist in the contemporary German sense or in terms of post-Saidian derision, as a liberal, a friend of the Kaiser, or a republican, as German imperialist or cosmopolitan, as part of a trajectory of Persophilia, as Iranian nationalist or as seeking refuge in the Eastern ideas he valued and sought to convey to the West.²⁸ He was all of that. Acting and acted upon within the worlds of power and knowledge, Friedrich Rosen epitomised the confluences constitutive of Saidian Orientalism in the sense of moving between politics and scholarship, time and again using one for the other.

The intent of this book is then to take the life, career and oeuvre of Friedrich Rosen in its wider scholarly and political contexts, and to analyse the relationship of Orientalist scholarship and international politics at the time of German empire. Looking at manifestations of Orient scholarship and Orient politics in Rosen's life and his contexts, the central questions posed are 1) when and

28 Zachary Lockman, *Contending Visions of the Middle East. The History and Politics of Orientalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 215; Sabine Mangold, *Eine “weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft” – Die deutsche Orientalistik im 19. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2004); Suzanne Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire. Religion, Race and Scholarship* (Washington: German Historical Institute, 2009); Reinhold Grünendahl, “History in the Making: On Sheldon Pollock's ‘NS Indology’ and Vishwa Adlur's ‘Pride and Prejudice’,” *International Journal of Hindu Studies* 16, no. 2 (August 2012): 189–257; Hamid Dabashi, *Persophilia. Persian Culture on the Global Scene* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015), 13–28; Navid Kermani, *Schöner neuer Orient. Berichte von Städten und Kriegen* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2003); Volker Perthes, *Orientalische Promenaden. Der Nahe und Mittlere Osten im Umbruch* (Munich: Siedler, 2006); Claudia Ott and Arno Widmann, “‘Der Orient ist kein Singular,’” *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 8 May 2016. Stefan Weidner, *1001 Buch – Die Literaturen des Orients* (Bad Herrenalb: Edition Converso, 2019).

under which circumstances the two realms connected, 2) how these connections were imprinted on specific instances of knowledge productions and political processes, 3) when and why scholarship and politics harmonised, and when and why not, 4) if and how this entailed or had as its goal the disciplining or suppression of a supposedly Oriental other, and lastly 5) what other results sprung forth from the encounters of the German Empire with lands considered part of the Orient.

In analysing these questions along the centrally placed Friedrich Rosen and branching out from him, I argue the following: power could create openings and guide scholarship in particular directions through its patronage. Imperial infrastructures were utilised by scholars (who were often enough foreign nationals) and were essential for the proliferation of Orientalist scholarship, just as the bestowing of financial support by governments and princes but also by private funders could make or break research enterprises. Yet, power could not control the production of knowledge or its ramifications, as the purpose of scholarship was defined and pursued by scholars, who operated following their own ideas, codes and constraints, which were more often than not incongruous with the imperatives of those pursuing political goals. With scholarship and its results often complicated and difficult to understand, politicians were often unable to grasp its meaning and implications. Notwithstanding various forms of censorship, once knowledge was produced and published, it was up to the reader to define its meaning and significance. The longevity of knowledge encapsulated in text and other formats, enduring in eras long after its genesis, and scholarship mechanically proliferating and finding entry into ever more regions and cultures, meant that knowledge became embedded, interpreted and adapted in contexts often far removed and outside of the control of the original power-holders. Knowledge, its seekers and the culture they maintained were often primarily concerned with itself and did not wish to associate scholarship with politics for fear of being perceived as compromising its claim of seeking objective truth. Nevertheless, knowledge was used in politics for the solidification, expansion and glorification of power. Various types, sources and forms of knowledge could be integrated and used by political stakeholders to maintain their legitimacy, oppress, co-opt or collaborate. This was dependent on what the overall political situation necessitated or allowed, and what political and scholarly actors decided on individually and collectively. In political institutions, knowledge was sought and used to optimise political functioning and performance, but politics did not seek out knowledge in and of itself, but selectively drew on it for its pursuit or stabilisation of power. Politicians were prone to selectively blind out sources of knowledge that were contradictory to policy amid the pressures of daily politics and power struggles. Or they simply did not know what knowl-

edge to rely on. The pursuit of knowledge in the sense of research expeditions, excavations or manuscript and artefact acquisition could be formative for the conduct of politics in the Orient, but tended to loose decisiveness when the political landscape became conflictual and relations between stakeholders antagonistic. Those in positions of power sought to weaponise knowledge for manipulation, to legitimise the use of brute force or to serve as a cheaper and less obvious alternative to drawing on military resources. In the metropolises, just as in the imperial peripheries, an array of nationalists, liberals and socialists equally utilised various forms of knowledge to challenge or replace existing dynamics and regimes of power.²⁹ Infused and reassembled from a vantage point of insurgency knowledge underwent, in the words of Gopal, a “reverse impact – including reverse appropriation and reworking”.³⁰

For Friedrich Rosen moving into the peripheries of European empires offered possibilities of producing knowledge that were not available within more solidified structures of academic life in the imperial cores. This liberation from the strictures of Oriental studies that focussed largely on philological examinations of ancient India, Bible lands, Assyria and Egypt, predominant in Germany all the way up to the Great War, enabled Rosen’s knowledge productions to take on subject matters largely opaque to the structural interests in the search for origins of Oriental studies in Germany. Rosen worked on places conceived of in Europe as Oriental – which he would consider as such, but in their specificities – out of a context of German Oriental studies. He employed a philologist tool box and addressed Orientalists in his writings. These Oriental studies were an integral part of a cross-European sphere of letters and publications, with a strong orientation towards the British but also to the French and Russian empires as conduits and rooms of scholarly engagement.

Central to Rosen’s position and character development in these structural environments was his childhood in Jerusalem. Arabic was not a strange language acquired with intention and function at a later stage in his education, but one of the languages he learned as a boy. Arabs were his playmates, his neighbours, and his parents’ friends and speaking Arabic his way of keeping a secret from his parents. Rosen felt difference between cultures, particularly when on “home” visits in Germany, but it was this lived normalcy of places and peoples far and wide that kindled his curiosity. The knowledge he produced

²⁹ A.J.P. Taylor, *The Trouble Makers. Dissent Over Foreign Policy 1792–1939* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1957), 67–136; Nathanael Kuck, “Anti-Colonialism in a Post-Imperial Environment – the Case of Berlin, 1914–1933,” *Contemporary History* 49, no. 1 (2014): 134–59.

³⁰ Priyamvada Gopal, *Insurgent Empire. Anticolonial Resistance and British Dissent* (London: Verso, 2019), 6.

as a result diverted from the heavy focus on antiquity. His interest was the contemporary and medieval. Modern and medieval were living categories for Rosen, and he found both in India, Iran, the Ottoman Empire, Ethiopia and Morocco through reading and discussing with local scholars and savants. It were those living cultures that Rosen studied and engaged with politically – on the basis of the knowledge that he acquired and for the benefit of the German empire. Drawing on his engagements with people and sources across the Orient to grasp and give meaning to life at the crossroads of modernity, his actions as a representative of state and as a scholarly and private individual were for long in many ways congruous. Rosen climbed the diplomatic ladder, using his “Oriental knowledge”, at a time when Germany’s political and economic role on the world stage reached its peak. Palpable from before the start of his diplomatic career though, the contradictions between supporting German political and economic expansion as a government official and bemoaning the cultural destruction brought about by globalising trade and technological advancements intensified eventually, leading him into covert and open conflict with his superiors and the paradigm of European superiority.

A Diplomatic Career Tied to the Rise of Germany

Rosen’s first steps as dragoman, translating and interpreting between Turkish, Arabic and Persian in Beirut and Tehran in the 1890s, came at a time before Germany pursued an assertive Orient policy. When German involvement in the Baghdad railway amplified and Kaiser Wilhelm II toured the Ottoman Empire with much pomp, the position of consul that Rosen filled in Baghdad and Jerusalem at the turn of the century had gained in political relevance. Using his language abilities Rosen made a name for himself in Berlin, leading to his appointment to the Orient desk of the authoritative political section of the Auswärtiges Amt in 1900. Rosen’s position in Berlin weakened as he came to openly doubt the prudence of Germany’s involvement in the Middle East. In his experience the Ottomans were weak and the entrenched positions of Russia and Britain on the crumbling empire’s borders would lead a more involved Germany into conflicts it stood little to gain from.

His appointment to head a mission to establish diplomatic relations with the for European power politics rather insignificant Ethiopia in the first half of 1905 may not have been a direct consequence of voicing his contrarian views on Germany’s Weltpolitik to the Kaiser the year before. However, as Rosen and Menelik II negotiated minor political and trade matters in Addis Ababa, the Kaiser landed in Tangier on the behest of chancellor Bernhard von Bülow and the grey emi-

nence of the *Auswärtiges Amt* Friedrich von Holstein. Before leaving Ethiopia Rosen received the news that he had been appointed Germany's envoy in Tangier. In the following five years, Rosen was tasked with maintaining Morocco's sovereignty and advancing German business interests despite the agreement reached at the international Algericas conference in the spring of 1906, which had effectively handed over policing and financial control of the sultanate to France. Relatively successful in utilising his toolset of language and cultural acumen and with resources put at his disposal by the German colony in Morocco, Rosen was a permanent prick in the side of French colonial aspirations. Concurrently, he urged his superiors in Berlin that Germany should liquefy its position in Morocco in exchange for "an equivalent" elsewhere.

After Rosen left "the Orient" in 1910 for European postings in Bucharest, Lisbon and The Hague the widely recognised "Orientkenner" remained a critical observer of Germany's Orient policies. Rosen advised Berlin's decision-makers to refrain from tying German strategy to the crumbling Ottoman Empire. Rosen urged the Kaiser and Wilhelmstraße to recognise Germany's political-military projection weakness in world regions where Britain, Russia or France had long-standing interests and means of political action. Weaponising the force of an Islamic *deus ex machina* would not tip the balance and could not be counted on, he argued. Not least due to Rosen's non-nobility and the upstart's lack of deep ties at the Kaiser's court and in Berlin's centres of power, the impact of Rosen with his arguably superior knowledge on the course of German politics – in Europe and beyond – was often bogged down in the quagmires that paved the way to the inconceivable abyss of the Great War.

A Lifetime of Poetry and the Pursuit of Oriental Knowledge

Alongside the various stations of his diplomatic career in places considered part of the Orient, Rosen enjoyed hearing the poetry and songs of the peoples he encountered. He filled notebook after notebook with single poems, collections of particular poets he liked, excerpts of prosaic texts from books and manuscripts, panegyric rhymes his friends sent him and songs he had listened to on riverboats, sung by caravan travellers or put to music in garden parties. In his hours of leisure in political office or on long-winded horseback journeys in lands, where mechanised travel had not penetrated, Rosen translated many of these pieces and compilations of poetry to German, some to English. Rosen's engagement with Persian and Arabic literature predated his diplomatic career. He grew up in Jerusalem the first 11 years of his life (1856–1867) as the son of the Lippan scholar-consul in the service of the Prussian kingdom, Georg Rosen. Jer-

usalemite Arabic was next to German and English – the native tongues of his father and his mother Serena Rosen née Moscheles – the language of Friedrich Rosen's childhood. His father had studied Persian in Tiflis in the 1840s and had been dragoman at the Prussian embassy in Constantinople before becoming Prussian consul in Jerusalem in 1853, where his scholarly activities included the translation of contemporary Arabic poetry. Friedrich Rosen benefitted from his father's interests, and was instructed in Arabic calligraphy from an early age. When his father went into retirement in their ancestral Detmold, father and son read the collections of the Persian poetic greats Sa'di, Jalal ed-Din Muhammad Rumi (1207–1273) and Khwaja Shams ed-Din Muhammad Hafez (1315–1390).

Feeling out of place after his move from Jerusalem to rural Germany, Rosen had continued practicing Arabic alone, as he dreamt of home in Jerusalem. Asked in later years where he had learnt Persian, Rosen emphatically replied: "With my father in Detmold!"³¹ He continued learning Asian and European languages during his studies of philology in Leipzig, Göttingen, Munich and Paris. After university he became a Romance languages teacher at a girls' school in Hanover and subsequently house teacher of prince Albrecht of Prussia. Albrecht had commanded the infantry regiment in which Rosen spent his military service year. As house teacher Rosen also returned east. In 1886/7 he was engaged by the British viceroy of India, Lord Dufferin, to prepare his son in German and French for the entry exams to the British Foreign Office. In India Rosen read Omar Khayyam with his employer Dufferin, listened to his Afghan servant's recitations of Sa'di and raved over Hafez's poetry sung at a celebration staged by the maharajah of Varanasi (Benares) on the Ganges. Travelling in and outside the viceregal apparatus, Rosen was struck by the vibrant theatre scene he encountered and began studying the most popular Indian theatre production of the day, the Hindustani language *Indar Sabha* by Agha Hasan Amanat. Upon his return to Europe, Rosen married Nina Roche, a pianist from London, and made a doctoral dissertation out of his analysis and translation of the modern Indian theatre piece. The newly wedded couple paid their bills by Rosen's teaching position at the newly established Seminar für Orientalische Sprachen (SOS) in Berlin. Teaching Persian and Hindustani at Germany's main language and culture training school for diplomats, merchants and colonial administrators, Rosen also produced a self-study book of the contemporary Persian language.

31 Frank Meier, *Lipper unterwegs. Reisende zwischen 1800 und 1918* (Holzminden: Jörg Mitzkat, 2013), 126.

The range of Rosen's translations of poetry, prose and songs from before, during, after and in relation to his diplomatic years is reflected in his 1924 compilation *Harut und Marut und andere Dichtungen aus dem Orient* which contained samples of translations from six languages: The translation of the title-inspiring Arabic story of two angels Harut and Marut Rosen only carried out in the early 1920s. It was inspired by an analysis of the German Semitist Enno Littmann in 1916 and based on a version relayed by fifteenth century Persian historian Mir-Khwand from Khorasan. Furthermore, Rosen included excerpts of Sa'di's poetry and prose originated with collections of his father Georg, from his time in India and from friendly interactions in the 1890s with his friend Zahir ed-Dowleh, the ceremonial master of the Shah's court in Tehran; a poem by the Isma'iliite philosopher Nasir Khusraw Rosen received from an Iranian friend in The Hague in 1918; a collection of advice in poetic form by Abdullah Ansari that an Ottoman official had gifted to Rosen after an animated conversation in Beirut in 1890; songs and single verses of Hafez Rosen gathered in India and while travelling in Iran; poems of Rumi Rosen had studied at the Safi 'Ali Shahiyya derwish order in Tehran, with the Iranian envoy to Berlin Mahmud Khan Qajar Ehtesham es-Saltaneh in the early 1900s, and with his father, who had translated Rumi's *Masnawi* before his birth in the 1840s; a couple of Arabic qassidas that had resulted from a poetic joust with the sheikh of the Tay tribe outside Baghdad in 1898, complemented by Iranian dialect quatrains of Baba Tahir, from Rosen's journey via Luristan to Tehran later that year. A doha in Hindi, a verse by the last Mughal ruler of Delhi Bahadur Shah on the occasion of his abdication, a verse about the controversial mystic Hallaj by an unidentified poet and a song from the *Indar Sabha* – all three in Hindustani – were gathered by Rosen during his Indian sojourn. The last poem – a peace song in Somali – was recorded by Rosen on the journey of the German mission to Ethiopia near the in Islam holy city of Harar in 1905.³²

Next to the academic Orientalist impetus, the "Oriental" poetry Rosen drew on for his translations stemmed from more or less politically charged contemporary and long past contexts. The poems were united not only by the handle "Orient", but in reflecting a world Rosen had lived and operated in that functioned often in versified speech and script. It was not coincidental that the study guides for the entry exams to British India's Civil Service, which by 1905 recommended Rosen's Persian grammar as "most likely to assist students in their general reading" of the Persian language, required a fluent understanding of Sa'di's *Guli-*

32 Friedrich Rosen, *Harut und Marut und andere Dichtungen aus dem Orient verdeutscht durch Friedrich Rosen* (Berlin: Georg Stilke, 1924).

stan.³³ Despite the risk of himself being orientalist, Rosen cultivated this “Oriental” style and the wisdom it proffered for public effect in a number of European contexts. Yet, poetic form was more subtly and substantially imprinted on his thought and political actions and served him as a vehicle to translate what he found “merkwürdig” (remarkable/peculiar), “eigentümlich” (idiosyncratic) or familiar in other cultures to the language of the German “Dichter und Denker” (poets and thinkers). For Rosen, as for many others, poetry was knowledge, form and a central way of conceiving of existence all at once.

The most important body of translated poetry he compiled and analysed was not included in the collection of *Harut und Marut*. His translation of the aphoristic *Ruba’iyat* of Omar Khayyam as the *Sinnsprüche Omars des Zeltmachers* was Rosen’s first major publication success in 1909. Going through several editions, Rosen’s *Sinnsprüche* became the standard German translation of the *Ruba’iyat* by the time it was included in the programme of the canonical Insel-Verlag. After a first encounter in the Anglo-Indian context of the Indian viceregal court in 1887, Rosen began studying and translating the *Ruba’iyat* in Iran in the 1890s and polished a first compilation of quatrains while miserable in Morocco around 1907. Rosen’s *Sinnsprüche* included a lengthy discussion of the eleventh century philosopher’s worldview that benefitted vastly from input of key figures of European Oriental studies, such as the Hungarian Islamicist Ignaz Goldziher, the British scholars Edward Granville Browne and Edward Denison Ross, and the Danish Iranist Arthur Christensen. Delegated by the German government to the fifteenth International Orientalist Congress in Copenhagen in 1908, Rosen had given a talk on Omar Khayyam’s worldview, provoking the interest and corrections of the luminaries present.

Rosen’s work on Omar Khayyam rekindled his academic engagement in European Orientalist circles. By and large his doctoral dissertation had been ignored, and while his Persian self-study guides in German and English were recognised by Iranist colleagues in England and Germany, Rosen had not engaged in publishing his scholarship since leaving the SOS. Rosen had, however, studied recent Iranian history and continued to exchange thoughts with Iranists in Europe while in Tehran. With his rising political stature he came to support the research and career advancement of his German Orientalist friends, while cultivating relations with Orientalist scholars from other European countries. Chief among his achievements was the creation of a chair in Iranian studies

33 “Inclusion of the First Book of the Gulistan in the New Text-Book for the Lower Standard in Persian,” August 1912, No. 2226, Repository I Government of India. Army Department. General Staff Branch, NAI.

for Friedrich Carl Andreas at Göttingen University and the orchestration of the Aksum excavations in Ethiopia under Enno Littmann. But his career in foreign affairs did not merely produce scholarly outcomes. Scholarship also influenced his politics. Rosen opened the 1913 republication of his father's translation of Rumi's *Masnavi* with a discussion of Sufi Islam, providing a rudimentary explanation of the teachings of the mystic Rumi. Highlighted was what he had learned at the modernist Safi 'Ali Shahiyya order in Tehran, feeding into his perception of what role Sufism played in societal development in the Islamic world. Rosen's argument that Sufism in the Islamic world had been misunderstood in Europe and falsely maligned underpinned his belief that European involvement in majority Muslim states was counterproductive and that Germany's pan-Islam-cum-Holy-War strategy in the lead up to the Great War was doomed to failure.

The majority of Rosen's publications appeared after his diplomatic career and the end of German empire. In some ways they were works of remembering – retrospections of his life in places in a past era. In others he soaked up contemporary developments from around the world and in Germany, he found concentrated in the multicultural Berlin of the tumultuous 1920s. His books and articles were often infused with encounters, experiences and studies of manuscripts he had carried out or collected decades earlier, but had not found the opportunity to publish. Among them were a national history of Afghanistan based on Persian sources from Tehran and the British Museum in London, an intellectual history of medieval Iran, a discussion of Indian nationalism, an essay on the philosophy of Nasir Khusraw, a contribution on Sufism in a university text book on religions and a number of works on Omar Khayyam and the *Ruba'iyat*. During the first decades of the twentieth century a global debate was ongoing as to whether the *Ruba'iyat* were actually penned by the eleventh century philosopher, and if so how many of its quatrains were authentic, or if the corpus of over a thousand quatrains had been attributed to him entirely posthumously. Rosen took part in the Khayyam frenzy with an analysis of a newly discovered *Ruba'iyat* manuscript, a prosaic translation of that manuscript to English and with a discussion in Persian on the state of the art of international Khayyam research. A Persian edition of the *Ruba'iyat* was prompted by his association with the Iranian circles of the later socialist leader Taqi Erani, the Azeri poet and journalist Mahmud Ghanizadeh, and educator and former mayor of Tabriz Mirza Mohammad Tarbiyat around the intellectual centre of Berlin's Kaviani publishing house. Published by Kaviani, Rosen's Persian *Ruba'iyat* and his earlier German works entered Iranian discourses, finding expression in academic studies but also in the novelist Sadeq Hedayat's description of Omar Khayyam representing the "Aryan spirit in Semitic vest". Rosen's ascription of a supposed Aryan quality of free-thinking in Khayyam in the earlier editions

of the *Sinnsprüche* disappeared in his Weimar era discussions, as the Aryan myth lost appeal among his Iranist interlocutors and the rise of antisemitism came to affect him personally. After the coming to power of the NSDAP, Rosen was ostracised by most German Orientalists and came under “surveillance” by the Nazis. In 1971 the German newspaper in Tehran *Die Post* relayed his last days in 1935 as follows:

With seventy-nine years he travelled to Beijing to his son Georg, who was working at the German legation there. With enthusiasm he quickly learned Chinese so well that he could read with his teacher the *Analects* of Confucius. When he wanted to show his three year old grandchild how to squat, he broke his leg and died two weeks later from an aneurism.³⁴

State of the Art and Methodological Considerations

The phenomenon of *Orientalism*, that Said proposed in his seminal work in 1978, drew on Foucault and Gramsci in stipulating that regimes or structures of knowledge and power supported, enabled and invigorated each other in disciplining an Oriental other during the age of European empires and hegemonic power with a long and largely unbroken afterlife in the twentieth century.³⁵ As has been widely noted, not least by Said himself, the French and British Empires received their adequate due in his analysis of these connections, but the case of Germany (amongst others) was missing.³⁶ The lacuna of Said’s discussion of German cultural-literary Orientalism has been filled by a number of works starting in the 1990s.³⁷ German academic Orientalism also has been given due attention in relation to cultural, political, intellectual and socio-economic history. Partic-

³⁴ Carla von Urff, “Friedrich Rosen,” *Die Post* 42 (12 July 1971): 4.

³⁵ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 2–7.

³⁶ Said included discussions on specific German authors, such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, and Orientalists, like Eduard Sachau, Carl-Heinrich Becker and others, but they, just like some of the other formative figures of European Orientalism, Ignaz Goldziher and Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, figured mostly as supportive material. Said, *Orientalism*, 17–19, 24; Lockman, *History and Politics of Orientalism*, 188.

³⁷ Polaschegg and Berman, who deal with the long nineteenth century most comprehensively, offer thorough overviews. Nina Berman, *Orientalismus, Kolonialismus und Moderne. Zum Bild des Orients in der deutschsprachigen Kultur um 1900* (Stuttgart: Verlag für Wissenschaft und Forschung, 1996); Andrea Polaschegg, *Der andere Orientalismus. Regeln deutsch-morgenländischer Imagination im 19. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2005); Nina Berman, *German Literature on the Middle East. Discourses and Practices, 1000–1989* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011).

ularly, Marchand has in her wide-ranging *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire* demonstrated the central position of German Orientalists in the wider sphere of European Oriental studies, despite Germany's short-lived empire.³⁸

There have been a number of studies concerned with Germany's colonial period in Africa and East Asia and the Pacific Ocean, but if, as suggested in *Orientalism*, the Orient was disciplined Said's argument appears in studies on Germany's political past with and in "the Orient" mostly fractured into bi-national analyses. Apart from discussions of the Baghdad railway affair and the Morocco crises standard editions of German foreign affairs usually do not dedicate particular attention to the Orient or its subcategories. As Rose explains, the "Orientalische Frage" (the Eastern Question) in European foreign affairs was concerned primarily with the ramifications of the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. Similarly, Schöllgen discusses the "Orientalische Frage" and dedicates only minor sections to German relations with Iran and Morocco or other lands considered Oriental.³⁹ This is not much different in studies on Kaiser Wilhelm II that deal with the emperor's journey to the Ottoman Empire in 1898 and his enthusiasm for archaeology but do not engage significantly with his thought and actions in the extra-European world conceived of as Oriental.⁴⁰ Chancellor Bern-

38 Next to Marchand, Hanisch, Mangold-Will and Wokoeck have contributed the most comprehensive studies. Ludmila Hanisch, *Die Nachfolger der Exegeten: deutschsprachige Erforschung des Vorderen Orients in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003); Mangold, "Weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft"; Marchand, *German Orientalism*; Ursula Wokoeck, *German Orientalism. The Study of the Middle East and Islam from 1800 to 1945* (London: Routledge, 2009).

39 Gregor Schöllgen, *Imperialismus und Gleichgewicht. Deutschland, England und die orientalische Frage 1871–1914*, 3 (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2000); Klaus Hildebrand, *Das vergangene Reich. Deutsche Außenpolitik von Bismarck bis Hitler. 1871–1945* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2008); Gregor Schöllgen, *Deutsche Außenpolitik von 1815 bis 1945* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2013); Andreas Rose, *Die Außenpolitik des Wilhelminischen Kaiserreichs (1890–1918)* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2013); Andreas Rose, *Deutsche Außenpolitik in der Ära Bismarck (1862–1890)* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2013), 67.

40 Beigel's and Mangold-Will's recent edition *Wilhelm II. Archäologie und Politik um 1900* makes important contributions to understanding the centrality of Oriental archaeology in Wilhelmine politics and is a notable exception. John C.G. Röhl, *Wilhelm II. Der Aufbau der persönlichen Monarchie 1888–1900* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2001); Isabel V. Hull, *The Entourage of Kaiser Wilhelm II 1888–1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); John C.G. Röhl, *Wilhelm II. Der Weg in den Abgrund 1900–1914* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2008); Christopher Clark, *Wilhelm II. Die Herrschaft des letzten deutschen Kaisers*, 4, trans. Norbert Juraschitz (Munich: Pantheon, 2008); John C.G. Röhl, *Wilhelm II. Die Jugend des Kaisers, 1859–1888* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2013); Sabine Mangold-Will, "Die Orientreise Wilhelms II.: Archäologie und die Legitimierung einer hohenzollernschen Universalmonarchie zwischen Orient und Okzident," in *Wilhelm II. Archäologie und Politik um 1900*, Thorsten Beigel and Sabine Mangold-Will (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2017), 53–66.

hard von Bülow stands connected to his Morocco politics and “Weltpolitik” alone.⁴¹ Equally, studies on the Auswärtiges Amt as an institution are not much concerned with the geographical category of the Orient or the places considered part of it.⁴² The perspective is – perhaps unsurprisingly – in all cases firmly situated in and on German history. Steininger’s recent run-down of German-Middle Eastern relations from Kaiser Wilhelm II to Angela Merkel oddly begins with Theodor Herzl in 1898, and does not substantially engage with the Orient as a category in German imperialism.⁴³

There have been a number of studies focusing on German-Ottoman relations with Fuhrmann standing out with his useful application of Said’s work.⁴⁴ Analyses deal with German-Persian relations,⁴⁵ Prussia and Germany in the Holy

41 Gerd Fesser, *Reichskanzler Bernhard Fürst von Bülow. Eine Biographie* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1991); Peter Winzen, *Reichskanzler Bernhard von Bülow. Mit Weltmachtphantasien in den Ersten Weltkrieg. Eine politische Biographie* (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 2013).

42 Kurt Doß, *Das deutsche Auswärtige Amt im Übergang vom Kaiserreich zur Weimarer Republik. Die Schülersche Reform* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1977); Kurt Doß, “Vom Kaiserreich zur Weimarer Republik: Das deutsche diplomatische Korps in einer Epoche des Umbruchs,” in *Das diplomatische Korps 1871–1945*, Klaus Schwabe (Boppard am Rhein: Harald Boldt, 1985), 81–100; Eckart Conze, *Das Auswärtige Amt. Vom Kaiserreich bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2013).

43 Rolf Steininger, *Germany and the Middle East from Kaiser Wilhelm II to Angela Merkel* (New York: Berghahn, 2018), 6.

44 Malte Fuhrmann, “Den Orient deutsch machen. Imperiale Diskurse des Kaiserreichs,” *Kakanien Revisited*, 28 July 2002, 1–12. Malte Fuhrmann, *Der Traum vom deutschen Orient. Zwei deutsche Kolonien im Osmanischen Reich* (Frankfurt: Campus, 2006); Malte Fuhrmann, “Anatolia as a Site of German Colonial Desire and National Re-Awakenings,” *New Perspectives on Turkey* 41 (2009): 117–50; Malte Fuhrmann, “Deutschlands Abenteuer im Orient. Eine Geschichte semi-kolonialer Verstrickungen,” in *Türkisch-Deutsche Beziehungen. Perspektiven aus Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, Claus Schöning, Ramazan Çalık, and Hatice Bayraktar (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 2012), 10–33; Ulrich Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire, 1914–1918* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968); Wolfgang G. Schwanitz, “The German Middle Eastern Policy, 1871–1845,” *Interdisciplinary Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* X-XI (2001): 1–23; Mustafa Gencer, *Imperialismus und die orientalische Frage. Deutsch-Türkische Beziehungen 1871–1908* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2006); Erdal Kaynar, “Les jeunes Turcs et l’Allemagne avant 1908,” *Turcica* 38 (2006): 281–321; Sean McMeekin, *The Berlin-Baghdad Express. The Ottoman Empire and Germany’s Bid for World Power, 1898–1918* (London: Penguin, 2011); Naci Yorulmaz, *Arming the Sultan. German Arms Trade and Personal Diplomacy in the Ottoman Empire Before World War I* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014).

45 Bradford G. Martin, *German-Persian Diplomatic Relations. 1873–1912* (S-Gravenhage: Mouton & Co, 1959); Ulrich Gehrke, *Persien in der deutschen Orientpolitik während des ersten Weltkrieges* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1960); Oliver Bast, *Les Allemands en Perse pendant la première guerre mondiale d’après les sources diplomatiques françaises*. (Paris: Diffusion Peeters, 1997); Piotr Szlanta, *Die deutsche Persienpolitik und die russisch-britische Rivalität 1906 bis*

Land⁴⁶ and wider Syria.⁴⁷ Other studies discuss views on Germany in the Maghreb and Germans in Morocco,⁴⁸ Germany's propaganda efforts in Egypt and its military missions in the larger Middle East during the First World War⁴⁹ and studies of extra-European presences in Germany during the war.⁵⁰ Par-

1914, (Schenefeld: EB-Verlag, 2006); Jennifer Jenkins, "Experts, Migrants, Refugees. Making the German Colony in Iran, 1900–1934," in *German Colonialism in a Global Age*, Bradley Narranch and Geoff Eley (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 147–69.

46 Bernhard Karnatz, "Das preußisch-englische Bistum in Jerusalem," *Berlin Brandenburgische Kirchengeschichte* 47 (1972): 1–10; Isaiah Friedman, *Germany, Turkey, and Zionism, 1897–1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977); Martin Lückhoff, *Anglikaner und Protestanten im Heiligen Land. Das gemeinsame Bistum Jerusalem (1841–1886)* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998); David Kushner, "Osmanische Reaktionen auf die fremde Infiltration in Eretz Israel," in *Das Erwachen Palästinas im 19. Jahrhundert. Alex Carmel zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Yaron Perry and Erik Petry (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 2001), 21–30; Yaron Perry, "Die englisch-preußische Zusammenarbeit im Heiligen Land," in *Das Erwachen Palästinas im 19. Jahrhundert. Alex Carmel zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Yaron Perry and Erik Petry (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 2001), 31–46; Lars Hänsel, "Friedrich Wilhelm IV and Prussian Interests in the Middle East," in *Germany and the Middle East. Past, Present, and Future*, Haim Goren (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2003), 15–25; Haim Goren, "Zieht hin und erforscht das Land". *Die deutsche Palästinaforschung im 19. Jahrhundert*, trans. Antje Clara Naujoks (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2003); Haim Goren, "The Scholar Precedes the Diplomat: German Science in the Service of Political Involvement in Egypt and Palestine Until 1870," in *Germany and the Middle East. Past, Present, and Future*, Haim Goren (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2003), 41–60; Haim Goren, *Dead Sea Level. Science, Exploration and Imperial Interests in the Near East* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011); Maibritt Gustrau, *Orientalen oder Christen? Orientalisches Christentum in Reiseberichten deutscher Theologen* (Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2016).

47 Michael Stürmer, "From Moltke to Gallipoli: Strategies and Agonies in the Eastern Mediterranean," in *Germany and the Middle East. Past, Present, and Future*, Haim Goren (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2003), 3–13; Ingeborg Huhn, *Johann Gottfried Wetzstein. Orientalist und preußischer Konsul im osmanischen Syrien (1849–1861)* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 2016).

48 Herbert Landolin Müller, *Islam, ġihād ("Heiliger Krieg") und Deutsches Reich. Ein Nachspiel zur wilhelminischen Weltpolitik im Maghreb 1914–1918* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1991); Gunther Mai, *Die Marokko-Deutschen 1873–1918* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014).

49 Thomas L. Hughes, "The German Mission to Afghanistan, 1915–1916," *German Studies Review* 25, no. 3 (October 2002): 447–76; Hans-Ulrich Seidt, *Berlin, Kabul, Moskau. Oskar Ritter von Niedermayer und Deutschlands Geopolitik* (Munich: Universitas, 2002); Alexander Will, *Kein Griff nach der Weltmacht. Geheime Dienste und Propaganda im deutsch-österreichisch-türkischen Bündnis 1914–1918* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2012).

50 Klaus Kreiser, "Türkische Studenten in Europa," in *Fremde Erfahrungen: Asiaten und Afrikaner in Deutschland, Österreich und in der Schweiz bis 1945*, Gerhard Höpp, (Berlin: Das Arabische Buch, 1996), 385–98; Joachim Oesterheld, "Zum Spektrum der indischen Präsenz in Deutschland von Beginn bis Mitte des 20. Jahrhunderts," in *Fremde Erfahrungen: Asiaten und Afrikaner in Deutschland, Österreich und in der Schweiz bis 1945*, Gerhard Höpp, (Berlin: Das Arabische

ticularly thorough have been analyses on German-Ethiopian relations, also with regards to the interplay of scholarship and politics.⁵¹ Studies looking at the Great War from a Middle Eastern or British imperial perspective include a proportionate amount of material on the role of German involvement.⁵² With the centenary of the Great War and the topicality of Islam, a number of analyses on Germany's attempts to instrumentalise Islam politically and militarily during the Great War have appeared.⁵³ There have also been several analyses of the interaction of Orient politics and Orient scholarship along the lines of the "Jihad Made in Germany" wartime debate,⁵⁴ and several studies are forthcoming in this broad context.⁵⁵

Buch, 1996), 331–46; Keivandokht Ghahari, *Nationalismus und Modernismus in Iran in der Periode zwischen dem Zerfall der Qāğāren-Dynastie und der Machtfestigung Reżā Schahs. Eine Untersuchung über die intellektuellen Kreise um die Zeitschriften Kāweh, Irānšahr und Āyandeh* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 2001).

51 Bairu Tafla, *Ethiopia and Germany. Cultural, Political and Economic Relations, 1871–1936* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1981); Thomas Zitelmann, "Enno Littmann (1875–1958). Äthiopische Studien und deutscher Orientalismus," in *In kaiserlichem Auftrag. Die deutsche Aksum-Expedition 1906 unter Enno Littmann. Band 1: Die Akteure und wissenschaftlichen Unternehmungen der DAE in Eritrea*, Steffen Wenig (Aichwald: Linden Soft, 2006), 99–110; Wolbert G.C. Smidt, "Introduction. A Short History of Ethiopian-German Relations from Biblical Dreams to the Modern State," in *Cultural Research in Northeastern Africa: German Histories and Stories*, Wolbert G.C. Smidt and Sophia Thubauville (Frankfurt: Frobenius Institut, 2015), 1–9.

52 Eugene Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans. The Great War in the Middle East, 1914–1920* (London: Allen Lane, 2015); David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace. The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Henry Holt, 2009); Niall Ferguson, *Empire. How Britain Made the Modern World* (London: Allen Lane, 2003).

53 Clark's *Sleepwalkers* perceives of the extra-European world mainly as an extension of European power politics. Münkler's *Der Große Krieg* is rudimentary in its discussion of the world outside Europe. Similarly, Leonhard's *Büchse der Pandora* expands outside of European war history mostly in passing. Zürcher, Loth and Hanisch have compiled useful editions that offer a number of new interpretations and contextualisations. Christopher Clark, *Die Schlafwandler. Wie Europa in den Ersten Weltkrieg zog*, trans. Norbert Juraschitz (Munich: Pantheon, 2015); Herfried Münkler, *Der Große Krieg. Die Welt 1914 bis 1918* (Berlin: Rowohlt, 2017); Jörn Leonhard, *Die Büchse der Pandora. Geschichte des Ersten Weltkriegs* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2014); Erik-Jan Zürcher, "Introduction: The Ottoman Jihad, the German Jihad and the Sacralization of War," in *Jihad and Islam in World War I. Studies on the Ottoman Jihad on the Centenary of Snouck Hurgronje's "Holy War Made in Germany"*, Erik-Jan Zürcher (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2016), 13–28; Wilfried Loth, "Dschihad made in Germany? Einleitung," in *Erster Weltkrieg und Dschihad. Die Deutschen und die Revolutionierung des Orients*, Wilfried Loth and Marc Hanisch (München: Oldenbourg, 2014), 7–12.

54 Wolfgang G. Schwanitz, "Djihad 'Made in Germany': Der Streit um den Heiligen Krieg 1914–1915," *Sozial.Geschichte* 18, no. 2 (2003): 7–34; Gottfried Hagen, "German Heralds of Holy War: Orientalists and Applied Oriental Studies," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the*

Of particular attraction has been Max von Oppenheim, an archaeologist, heir of a banking family, and long-time resident of Cairo attached to the German foreign service, who is sometimes unduly stylised as the mastermind behind Germany's Orient policies.⁵⁶ Oppenheim and Rosen were similar in the sense that they were increasingly identified by their Jewish ancestry, as antisemitism was on the rise in Germany and across Europe. Equally, Oppenheim's scholarly predilections and the application of some of his scholarly interests to political analysis connect him to Rosen. However, Oppenheim was neither a scholar of the German schools of Oriental studies – he was a trained lawyer, not a philologist – nor was the man of independent means a recognised part of the German dip-

Middle East 24, no. 2 (2004): 145–62; Wolfgang G. Schwanitz, "The Bellicose Birth of Euro-Islam in Berlin," in *Islam and Muslims in Germany*, Ala al-Hamarneh and Jörn Thielmann (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 183–214; Mustafa Aksakal, "'Holy War Made in Germany'? Ottoman Origins of the 1914 Jihad," *War in History* 18, no. 2 (2011): 184–99; McMeekin, *Berlin-Baghdad Express*; Josef van Ess, *Dschihad gestern und heute*, (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012); Jennifer Jenkins, "Fritz Fischer's 'Programme for Revolution': Implications for a Global History of Germany in the First World War," *Contemporary History* 48, no. 2 (April 2013): 397–417; Dietrich Jung, "The 'Ottoman-German Jihad': Lessons for the Contemporary 'Area Studies' Controversy," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 41, no. 3 (2014): 247–65; David Moshfegh, "Race, Religion and the Question of the Orient in *Islamwissenschaft*," in *Der Orient. Imaginationen in Deutscher Sprache*, Lena Salaymeh, Yossef Schwartz, and Galili Shahar (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2017), 95–139.

55 Next to studies by Stefan Kreutzer on Wilhelm Waßmuß and Samuel Krug on Berlin's war-time Nachrichtenstelle für den Orient, see Mark Hanisch, *Der Orient der Deutschen. Max von Oppenheim und die Konstituierung eines außenpolitischen Orients in der deutschen Nahostpolitik* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020).

56 Peter Hopkirk, *On Secret Service East of Constantinople. The Plot to Bring Down the British Empire* (London: John Murray, 1994). Donald M. McKale, "'The Kaiser's Spy': Max von Oppenheim and the Anglo-German Rivalry Before and During the First World War," *European History Quarterly* 27, no. 2 (April 1997): 199–219; Donald M. McKale, "Germany and the Arab Question Before World War I," *The Historian* 59, no. 2 (1997): 311–25; Sean McMeekin, "Jihad-Cum-Zionism-Leninism: Overthrowing the World, German-Style," *Historically Speaking* 12, no. 3 (2011): 2–5; Stefan M. Kreutzer, *Dschihad für den deutschen Kaiser. Max von Oppenheim und die Neuordnung des Orients (1914–1918)* (Graz: Ares, 2012); Barry Rubin and Wolfgang Schwanitz, *Nazis, Islamists, and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014); Lionel Gossman, *The Passion of Max von Oppenheim. Archaeology and Intrigue in the Middle East from Wilhelm II to Hitler* (Cambridge: OpenBook, 2014); Marc Hanisch, "Max Freiherr von Oppenheim und die Revolutionierung der islamischen Welt als anti-imperiale Befreiung von oben," in *Erster Weltkrieg und Dschihad. Die Deutschen und die Revolutionierung des Orients*, Wilfried Loth and Marc Hanisch (München: Oldenbourg, 2014), 13–38; Tilman Lüdke, "(Not) Using Political Islam. The German Empire and Its Failed Propaganda Campaign in the Near and Middle East, 1914–1918 and Beyond," in *Jihad and Islam in World War I. Studies on the Ottoman Jihad on the Centenary of Snouck Hurgronje's "Holy War Made in Germany"*, Erik-Jan Zürcher (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2016), 71–94.

lomatic apparatus or pursued the career of a diplomat.⁵⁷ Another difference between the two men were their Orients: Oppenheim's East was framed by his political-intellectual connections with pan-Islamic, modernist political figures congregating in Cairo and he pursued archaeological excavations in the Fertile Crescent. Rosen, in contrast, pursued a diplomat's career that took him all over, pivoting from his Jerusalemite upbringing to a long-lasting engagement with the Persianate world in literary, philosophical and religious domains.⁵⁸

This is not the first study that deals with the life of Friedrich Rosen. Under the title *Friedrich Rosen. Ein staatsmännisch denkender Diplomat. Ein Beitrag zur Problematik der deutschen Außenpolitik* in 1969 the journalist and archivist Herbert Müller-Werth (1900 – 1983) analysed Rosen's political engagements in the German foreign policy apparatus under the impression of the war guilt debate, positing that the catastrophe may not have happened had Rosen been foreign minister already before the Great War. Müller-Werth's diligent attempt at rehabilitating Rosen did not examine his extra-European politics or his Orientalist endeavours in much depth, but he left behind invaluable working papers.⁵⁹ A few

57 Gabriele Teichmann, "Max Freiherr von Oppenheim – Archäologe, Diplomat, Freund des Orients," in *Das große Spiel. Archäologie und Politik zur Zeit des Kolonialismus (1860–1940)*, Charlotte Trümpler (Essen: Ruhr Museum, 2008), 238–49; Martin Kröger, "Max von Oppenheim: Mit Eifer ein Fremder im Auswärtigen Dienst," in *Faszination Orient: Max von Oppenheim, Forscher, Sammler, Diplomat*, Gabriele Teichmann and Gisela Völger (Cologne: DuMont, 2001), 106–39.

58 The Persianate world is here understood in Fragner's sense of the "Persophonie" as a region spanning much of Asia in which Persian was a lingua franca in culture and politics until the nineteenth century and holding formative significance in the development of other languages such as Ottoman Turkish and Hindustani. Bert Fragner, *Die "Persophonie". Regionalität, Identität und Sprachkontakt in der Geschichte Asiens*, Homayun Alam (Nordhausen: T. Bautz, 2015); Sunil Sharma, *Mughal Arcadia. Persian Literature in an Indian Court* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017), 1–10.

59 Müller-Werth was the son of Oskar Müller, who had been a doctor attached to the German legation in Tehran in the 1890s. Müller-Werth interviewed Rosen several times in the 1930s and had volumes three and four of Rosen's autobiographical *Aus einem diplomatischen Wanderleben* published posthumously in 1959. In the Weimar Republic Müller-Werth was politically close to the left-liberal Deutsche Volkspartei. Hurwitz described him as a political companion of the communist and later GDR dissident Robert Havemann. "Under existential pressure" the journalist Müller-Werth sought to maintain his integrity in Nazi-Germany by writing historical articles on moderate foreign affairs. With the Gestapo on his tail, he quit his position with Bielefeld's *Westfälische Zeitung* in 1941 and found a job in Hesse's state archive in Wiesbaden, where he stayed until the end of his professional life. Herbert Müller-Werth, *Friedrich Rosen. Ein staatsmännisch denkender Diplomat. Ein Beitrag zur Problematik der deutschen Außenpolitik* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1969); Harold Hurwitz, *Robert Havemann. Eine persönlich-politische Biographie. Teil I: Die Anfänge* (Berlin: Entenfuß, 2012).

articles have since appeared that deal with specific episodes of Friedrich Rosen's diplomatic engagements outside of Europe. Mangold-Will has analysed Rosen's representation of his "Oriental slow" caravan journey from Tangier to Fez in 1906, Kreiser has studied the German reproduction of a Persian poetry collection for the Ottoman sultan with the support of Friedrich Rosen in the early 1900s, and Zimen, Daum and Zitelmann examined how Rosen utilised the 1905 diplomatic mission to bring about the Aksum archaeological expedition under the Semitist Enno Littmann. Most recently Jalali discussed in some detail Rosen's relationship with the Iranian socialist Taqi Erani in 1920s Berlin.⁶⁰ However, there is as yet no analysis that covers the full scope of Rosen's engagements in the context of Orient scholarship and politics.

The intention in this study is not to replace or supplement what might be called an Oppenheim-centric approach to Germany's Orient relationship with a similar reading of Rosen, even if it is noteworthy that their spheres only rarely overlapped. It is a daunting task to read a multi-layered relationship spanning such varied fields as politics, scholarship, religion, arts and music between one country and a geographically amorphous space covering parts of Africa and Europe and all of Asia through the lens of only one person. German Orient affairs as seen through the important figures of Oppenheim and Rosen show the drastically different histories of political-scholarly interaction between Germany and the Orient that emerge when tying such historical investigations to a person. Thus, in analysing Orient politics and scholarship at the age of German empire through the person of Friedrich Rosen, such a study cannot be understood as *pars pro toto*. Rosen's engagement with Egypt is aside from a quick talk with

60 Dag Zimen, *Rosen für den Negus. Die Aufnahme diplomatischer Beziehungen zwischen Deutschland und Äthiopien 1905. Ein Beitrag zum 100. Jahrestag deutsch-äthiopischer Beziehungen*, (Göttingen: Klaus Hess, 2005); Werner Daum, "Rosen, Littmann, Aksum," in *In Kaiserlichem Auftrag. Die Deutsche Aksum-Expedition 1906 Unter Enno Littmann. Band 1: Die Akteure und Wissenschaftlichen Unternehmungen der DAE in Eritrea*, Steffen Wenig (Aichwald: Linden Soft, 2006), 89–98; Thomas Zitelmann, "'Das Telegramm ist angekommen'. Friedrich Rosen, Enno Littmann und die politische Einbettung der Aksum-Expedition," in *In kaiserlichem Auftrag. Die deutsche Aksum-Expedition 1906 unter Enno Littmann. Band 1: Die Akteure und wissenschaftlichen Unternehmungen der DAE in Eritrea*, Steffen Wenig (Aichwald: Linden Soft, 2006), 111–17; Sabine Mangold, "Oriental Slowness? Friedrich Rosen's Expedition to the Sultan of Morocco's Court in 1906," in *The Diplomat's World. A Cultural History of Diplomacy, 1815–1914*, Markus Mössland and Torsten Riotte (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 255–83; Klaus Kreiser, "A Divan for the Sultan. Between the Production of an Oriental Text and the German Art of Printing," in *Turkish Language, Literature, and History. Travelers' Tales, Sultans, and Scholars Since the Eighth Century*, Bill Hickman and Gary Leiser (London: Routledge, 2016), 223–48; Younes Jalali, *Taghi Erani, a Polymath in Interwar Berlin. Fundamental Science, Psychology, Orientalism and Political Philosophy*. (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019).

Lord Cromer on his way back from Ethiopia in 1905 and earlier visits with his family minimal. Rosen viewed the Ottoman Empire from the peripheral cities of Jerusalem, Beirut and Baghdad, even as he travelled Asia Minor professionally more frequently than Egypt. The Armenian Genocide was entirely absent from Rosen's writings despite his friendship with a number of Armenians and his close relationship with the diplomat Wilhelm Litten, who had witnessed the Armenian death marches during the war. There was no noticeable engagement with Libya or Algeria altogether, and Tunisia appears also only as a stop on a trip. Rosen's time in the Indian subcontinent was at eighteen months quite short, and Bombay was the furthest south he travelled. Rosen showed an interest in Afghanistan and Central Asia at the time of the Turfan and Hotan expeditions, the increasing study of Manichaeism and during the visit of Afghan King Amanullah to Berlin in 1928, but these were not profound encounters or long intellectual engagements.⁶¹ South-East Asia was entirely missing from his purview. The story that the first thing Rosen did after arriving in Beijing in 1935 was to take a teacher to study Confucius may speak of his continuing interest in various languages and philosophies of far-flung places considered part of the Orient. But it does not say much about German-Chinese relations. Rosen's engagement with Ethiopia was intensive despite the brevity of his stay, but while Ethiopia was dealt with on the Orient desk by the Auswärtiges Amt, it is questionable if this last African sovereign empire was considered primarily as Oriental. During the lifetime of his scholar-diplomat father, Georg Rosen, places in the Balkans like Belgrade and Greece were still considered Oriental by virtue of belonging or being surrounded by the Ottoman Empire. However, in the Bucharest of Friedrich Rosen's lifetime the Orient was past and the rivalry between German royalty and Francophone bourgeoisie present. Similarly, in Rosen's mind the port cities Tangier and Calcutta were not Oriental but European. From a contemporary perspective, one may find the concept of the Orient outdated and the use of the label for analysing such wide geographic areas impractical, but then (and often enough now) these lands and regions were considered as part one large East, framing perceptions, understandings and actions in politics and scholarship. In spite of these obvious gaps and pitfalls then, the multitudinous engagements of the recognised "Orientkenner" Rosen between Germany and "the Orient" can serve as a guide to the relationship of imperial Orient scholar-

61 Marianne Yaldiz, "Die deutsche Turfan-Expeditionen nach Xinjiang (1902–1914): Im Wettstreit auf der Such nach einer verlorenen Kultur," in *Das große Spiel. Archäologie und Politik zur Zeit des Kolonialismus (1860–1940)*, Charlotte Trümpler (Essen: Ruhr Museum, 2008), 188–201; Franziska Torma, *Turkestan-Expeditionen: Zur Kulturgeschichte deutscher Forschungsreisen nach Mittelasien (1890–1930)* (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2011).

ship and politics. To quote on the fellow traveller between cultures Joseph Conrad, Rosen's perspective is valuable "not just despite its blind spots but because of them. [He] captured something about the way power operated across continents and races, something that seemed as important to engage with today" as it was then.⁶²

Inspired by the biographical approach of Colley in *The Ordeal of Elizabeth Marsh. A Woman in World History* of reading an individual in the various spatial contexts of her life, and studies in Middle Eastern and German history arising out of the context of microhistory, such as Wilson's *The Damascus Affair and the Beginnings of France's Empire in the Middle East*, Agmon's *Family & Court. Legal Culture and Modernity in Late Ottoman Palestine* and Reuter's *Paul Singer (1844–1911)*, this study thus intends to take Friedrich Rosen as a small scale unit of analysis to be historically contextualised in larger structures. As Agmon notes, this means "giving up on statistical typicality, but also highlights the significance of exploring extraordinary cases".⁶³ Another cue is taken from Ginzburg's *The Cheese and the Worms*. In seeking out the human Friedrich Rosen, who was "like us", but very different, this study explores Rosen's cultural-intellectual horizons, the books he read, how he read them, what he wrote and the relation of this knowledge of Rosen to the larger societal structures and politics around him.⁶⁴

Rather than analysing primarily Rosen as "extraordinary" or dedicating a biography to a forgotten "great man",⁶⁵ a study on the relationship of Orient pol-

⁶² Maya Jasanoff, *The Dawn Watch. Joseph Conrad in a Global World*. (London: William Collins, 2017), 4.

⁶³ Linda Colley, *The Ordeal of Elizabeth Marsh. A Woman in World History* (New York: Anchor Books, 2007); Mary C. Wilson, "The Damascus Affair and the Beginnings of France's Empire in the Middle East," in *Histories of the Modern Middle East: New Directions*, Israel Gershoni, Hakan Erdem, and Ursula Wokoeck (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2002), 63–74; Iris Agmon, *Family & Court. Legal Culture and Modernity in Late Ottoman Palestine* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2005), 50; Ursula Reuter, *Paul Singer (1844–1911). Eine politische Biographie* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 2004), 16–17.

⁶⁴ Carlo Ginzburg, *Der Käse und die Würmer. Die Welt eines Müllers um 1600*, 7, Karl F. Hauber (Berlin: Klaus Wagenbach, 2011), 7–8.

⁶⁵ As a consequence, this study largely excludes the biographical stretches of Rosen's life in Romania, Portugal and the Netherlands when not of consequence to his engagement with Orient scholarship and politics. Cornelis, Frey, Lademacher, Eversdijk and Marks discuss German-Dutch relations during the period of Rosen's time as envoy in The Hague between 1916 and 1921. Jerosch Herold has recently offered a short estimation of Rosen's time as envoy in Lisbon, and Lamego is working on a study of German-British Portugal politics and the Portuguese colonies at the time. Vincent-Smith has analysed the Anglo-German negotiations over Portuguese colonies at the time. Rosen does not appear in Zimmermann's study of the Romanian poet-

itics and scholarship at the time of German empire looking at Rosen and from him outwards offers a view on the institutional structures of government and academia with their respective codes, rites and purposes, as Rosen rose, influenced, fought, succeeded and suffered in both these realms. Where, with Luhmann, politics had as its ultimate goal power and scholarship pursued knowledge, Friedrich Rosen portrays the inherent confluences and conflicts between these realms of human action.⁶⁶ Power could provide thematic stimuli in the pursuit of knowledge, enable research financially and physically, but also cause distortion, manipulation and undue framing. With scholars pursuing knowledge acutely aware of these circumstances, they often struggled with their more or less pronounced dependency on political stakeholders and larger political developments. This was the case across disciplines, but was of particular concern for Orientalist scholars who depended on access to places and peoples along the lines of imperial arteries. Another conflicted question was whether, and if so how, the knowledge produced by scholars should feed back into politics. As many a scholar pursued a quest for religious, linguistic, cultural and human, applicability to the objectives of imperial expansion and consolidation of power was often not apparent.

These questions were especially patent at the International Orientalist Congresses, held usually in three-year intervals and bringing together a wide spectrum of the Orientalist themes, scholars from most European countries and to

ess-queen Elisabeth. Nicole P. Eversdijk, *Kultur als politisches Werbemittel. Ein Beitrag zur deutschen kultur- und pressepolitischen Arbeit in den Niederlanden während des Ersten Weltkrieges* (Münster: Waxmann, 2010), 97–132, 310–42; Marc Frey, “Bullying the Neutrals. The Case of the Netherlands,” in *Great War, Total War. Combat and Mobilization on the Western Front, 1914–1918*, Roger Chickering and Stig Förster (Washington: German Historical Institute, 2000), 227–46; Horst Lademacher, *Zwei ungleiche Nachbarn. Wege und Wandlungen der deutsch-niederländischen Beziehungen im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1990), 98–118; Sally Marks, “‘My Name is Ozymandias’ The Kaiser in Exile,” *Central European History* 16, no. 2 (June 1983): 122–70; Cornelis Smit, *Tien studiën betreffende Nederland in de Eerste Wereldoorlog* (Groningen: H. D. Tjeenk Willink, 1975), 20–24; Bernardo Jerosch Herold, “Friedrich Rosen, orientalista, diplomata e politico,” in *1.º Colóquio Sobre a Grande Guerra de 1914–1918* (Lisbon: Academia das Ciências de Lisboa, 2015); J.D. Vincent-Smith, “The Anglo-German Negotiations Over the Portuguese Colonies in Africa. 1911–1914,” *Historical Journal* 17, no. 3 (1974): 620–29; Silvia Irina Zimmermann, *Die dichtende Königin. Elisabeth, Prinzessin zu Wied, Königin von Rumänien, Carmen Sylva (1843–1916). Selbstmythisierung und prodynastische Öffentlichkeitsarbeit durch Literatur*. (Stuttgart: Ibidem, 2010).

⁶⁶ Richard Münch, *Soziologische Theorie. Band 3: Gesellschaftstheorie* (Frankfurt: Campus, 2002), 213.

a lesser extent from the Americas and places in the Orient.⁶⁷ Great events in the hosting cities, accompanied by lavish celebrations, these congresses depended on governments for their organisation and funding, and governments prided themselves with sending representatives to these scholarly gatherings. One of those representatives was Rosen, at the congresses in Hamburg in 1902 and in Copenhagen in 1908 oscillating between roles and using his position for his own intentions. In following Rosen to these pivotal Orientalist congregations, a view unfolds – somewhat compensating the lack of statistic representativeness – on the processes of approval and rejection between scholars and political representatives across the geographic and thematic scope of Orientalism at the turn of the century. Next to concrete interactions of politics and scholarship, the scholarship-internal processes and developments of harmonic inertia and antagonistic changes within the confines of “inter-collective thought exchanges” visible at these congresses and in larger Orientalist scholarship at the time, are viewed through a reading of Fleck’s analyses of thought styles and collectives in the *Entstehung und Entwicklung einer wissenschaftlichen Tatsache*.⁶⁸

Starting from the perspective of the individual to look at his or her surroundings and wider political and scholarly developments, while demonstrating the forces of socialisation, hierarchy, rules, expediency, ideology and ambition, is distinctly advantageous in investigating the interplay of Orient scholarship and politics at the time of German empire. Amid all the structures, it is with Loriga “le petit x”, the person, that makes it all happen:

Il me semble important de souligner combien le péril du relativisme, qui corrode le principe de responsabilité individuelle, est également inhérent à une lecture impersonnelle de l’histoire qui prétend décrire la réalité par le biais d’anonymes rapports de pouvoir.⁶⁹

67 Eckhardt Fuchs, “The Politics of the Republic of Learning. International Scientific Congresses in Europe, the Pacific Rim, and Latin America,” in *Across Cultural Borders: Historiography in Global Perspective*, Eckhardt Fuchs and Benedikt Stuchtey (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), 205–44; Pascale Rabault-F Feuerhahn, “‘Les grandes assises de l’orientalisme’. La question interculturelle dans les congrès internationaux des orientalistes (1873–1912),” *Revue germanique internationale* 12 (2010): 47–67.

68 Ludwik Fleck, *Entstehung und Entwicklung einer wissenschaftlichen Tatsache. Einführung in die Lehre vom Denkstil und Denkkollektiv*, 9 (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2012), 52–53, 143–45.

69 “It seems important to me to underline how the peril of relativism, that corrodes the principle of individual responsibility, is equally inherent to an impersonal reading of history that pretends to describe reality by the bias of anonymous reports of power.” Sabina Loriga, *Le Petit x. De la biographie à l’histoire* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2010), 12.

While conditioned and constrained, there were alternatives of action, decisions to be made and degrees of free choice.

Furthermore, with the structures of politics at the time often shaped by the formation and development of nation-states and their imperial extensions (often enough resulting in accompanying national/imperial history writing of long-lasting influence), the focus on an individual that moved like Rosen between these realms allows for an investigation of history beyond strict power divisions and national categories. In an emerging nation-state like Germany, that remained a federation of erstwhile varied political, economic and cultural entities, Rosen was not only proudly Lippian, but lived through the fusion of the diplomatic apparatus of Prussia with that of the other German kingdoms and principalities. Particularly the northern mercantile free-cities continued to shape German foreign politics. The local desire to establish a university befitting Hamburg's global trade as a driving factor for hosting an Orientalist congress far outweighed Berlin's political interest. Moreover, Rosen's socialisation into a family of West-German, Protestant, scholarly administrators and enlightened, artistic Jewish converts was a story spanning Prague, Leipzig, Berlin, Detmold, Hanover and London at a time when German nationalism was still in its nascency.

Formative was the fifteen-year period of the Rosen family's life in Jerusalem. His childhood in the mid-century Ottoman city shaped Friedrich Rosen's cognitive tools and his emotional sensation of comfort, care and home. The focus on Jewish Orientalism in recent years, but also considerations of other "minority" backgrounds and socio-economic factors, as underlined by Wokoeck, have shown that upbringing was formative to the approaches of Orientalists to the scholarship of their East.⁷⁰ Following Subrahmanyam in analysing travellers across Asia in the early modern period, cognitive framing was a continuous process, with impressions of one place, culture or people leading to comparisons

⁷⁰ Ivan Davidson Kalmar and Derek J. Penslar, "Orientalism and the Jews: An Introduction," in *Orientalism and the Jews*, Ivan Davidson Kalmar and Derek J. Penslar (Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 2005), xiii–xl; Susannah Heschel, "German Jewish Scholarship on Islam as a Tool for de-Orientalizing Judaism," *New German Critique* 39, no. 3 (2012): 91–107; Susannah Heschel, *Jüdischer Islam: Islam und jüdisch-deutsche Selbstbestimmung*, trans. Dirk Hartwig, Moritz Buchner, and Georges Khalil, *Fröhliche Wissenschaft* (Berlin: Matthes & Seitz, 2018); Wokoeck, *German Orientalism*; Gerdien Jonker, "Gelehrte Damen, Ehefrauen, Wissenschaftlerinnen. Die Mitarbeit der Frauen in der Orientalischen Kommission der Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin (1907–1945)," in *Frauen in Akademie und Wissenschaft: Arbeitsorte und Forschungspraktiken 1700–2000*, Theresa Wobbe (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2002), 125–66; Umar Ryad, "'An Oriental Orientalist': Aḥmad Zaki Pasha (1868–1934), Egyptian Statesman and Philologist in the Colonial Age," *Philological Encounters* 3 (2018): 129–66.

when encountering another.⁷¹ This was also reflected in Rosen's scholarship and political actions. Shaped by his environments, Rosen made choices based on his preferences and inclinations in situations that were often not clear-cut, effectuating unforeseen ramifications – for better or worse.⁷² Finding himself reminded of the Jerusalem of his childhood when entering “the Oriental city” of Isfahan for the first time, he remarked on the absence of large scale cultivated vegetation in Iraq in comparison to Iran. Meeting the provincial governor of Harar in Ethiopia, Ras Makonnen, Rosen saw the sophistication of a Persian nobleman, while Tangier was to Rosen as European as the new city outside the city walls of Jerusalem he returned to in 1899, or the Istanbul he visited in 1918. If it did not presuppose a sense of purity, one could with Bhabha speak of hybridity – a conceptualisation along the lines of acculturation or *métissage* is more fitting.⁷³

Taking the individual Rosen as a base unit of historical analysis also allows a view into the interaction of German and British foreign affairs in and outside Europe. With Germany as a state-entity late to the imperial scramble, Rosen, like other German operatives outside Europe, moved for the longest time as a junior partner in predominantly British diplomatic circles, depending on British imperial networks and power infrastructures, learning from its comment-faire, while in some capacity contributing to and influencing British politics.⁷⁴ Similarly, Ori-

71 Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Mughals and Franks. Explorations in Connected History* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005); Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *From the Tagus to the Ganges* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005), 2–15.

72 Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman, “Judgement Under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases,” *Science* 185, no. 4157 (1974): 1124–31; Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky, “Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision Under Risk,” *Econometrica* 47, no. 2 (1979): 263–92.

73 Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994); Homi K. Bhabha, “Signs Taken for Wonders,” *Critical Inquiry* 12 (1985): 144–45.

74 The movement of Germans and other Europeans into the world through foreign empire goes back centuries. Malekandathil demonstrated that Germans went to India as merchants and soldiers embedded in or serving the Portuguese empire since the sixteenth century. Conway, Tsoref-Ashkenazi and Panayi have shown that, driven by ambition or necessity, continental Europeans from Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden, France and Portugal moved into India and the wider world through the British empire since the eighteenth century. Hildebrand has analysed Prussian foreign affairs under British dominance leading up to the establishment of the German state. The joint establishment of the Anglo-Prussian bishopric in Jerusalem in the 1840s was another case of joint British-German action in the extra-European world, just as British rule over Heligoland during a period of “Anglo-German symbiosis” during the mid-nineteenth century did not prevent the North Sea island from becoming a site of German nation formation. As Rüger showed, German-British co-operation in Africa became particularly strong following the hand-over of Heligoland to Germany and the transfer of Zanzibar to Britain in 1890. When Germany began to establish its own colonies, German rule was often sampled on that of the British

entalist scholarship was an international undertaking, with German academics heavily relying on manuscript and book collections of the British, French, Russian or Dutch empires and like other scientists, but also missionaries and merchants, frequently seeking short or long term employment in foreign imperial contexts in the Orient. Also going back to the eighteenth century, scholars from other countries without an extended Oriental empire, like Hungary, Denmark, Italy and Sweden moved through the arteries of the British, Russian or French empires. Conversely, German scholars and the German university system were in a number of fields considered more advanced, resulting in German scholars being employed for their superior abilities and institutions of education finding emulation – with the School of Oriental and African Studies modelled on Berlin's Seminar für Orientalische Sprachen. As Manjapra noted in his insightful study on German-Indian entanglements through the British Empire, “British colonial science took on a markedly German character”.⁷⁵ Rosen's employment by

(or the Dutch), as in the cases of Carl Peters and Friedrich Rosen's friend, Wilhelm Solf, the governor of Samoa and later German colonial secretary. Similarly, Oppenheim in Cairo was as much informed by Egyptian intellectuals as he stood under British influence. Pius Malekandathil, *The Germans, the Portuguese and India* (Berlin: LIT, 1999); Stephen Conway, *Britannia's Auxiliaries. Continental Europeans and the British Empire, 1740–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); Chen Tsoref-Ashkenazi, *German Soldiers in Colonial India* (London: Routledge, 2016); Panikos Panayi, *The Germans in India. Elite European Migrants in the British Empire* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017); Klaus Hildebrand, *No intervention. Die Pax Britannica und Preußen 1865/66–1869/80. Eine Untersuchung zur englischen Weltpolitik im 19. Jahrhundert* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1997); Ulrike Lindner, *Koloniale Begegnungen. Deutschland und Großbritannien als Imperialmächte in Afrika 1880–1914* (Frankfurt: Campus, 2011); Benedikt Stutchtey, *Die europäische Expansion und ihre Feinde: Kolonialismuskritik vom 18. bis in das 20. Jahrhundert* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2010), 263; Jan Rüger, *Heligoland. Britain, Germany, and the Struggle for the North Sea* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); Peter J. Hempenstall and Paula Tanaka Mochida, *The Lost Man. Wilhelm Solf in German History* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005), 95–109; Arne Perras, *Carl Peters and German Imperialism 1865–1918. A Political Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004); M. Hanisch, “Anti-imperiale Befreiung,” 22–26.

⁷⁵ Of German-Dutch heritage, Albert Houtum-Schindler facilitated many a study in Iran, among them most notably George Curzon's *The Persian Question*. Most famously Max Müller was formative for British Indology for decades, but also Orientalists like Rosen's uncle Friedrich August Rosen, his father Georg Rosen, or the Indologists Richard Pischel, Georg Thibault, Rudolf Hoernlé and Gustav Oppert moved in and out of British and British Indian academia. The German consul and philologist Paul Schroeder found his academic home in the francophone Jesuit Université de Saint-Joseph in Beirut. Similarly, Danish scholars like Vilhelm Thomsen benefitted from the funding of the Finno-Ugric society in Russian Finland. Several German philologists worked in Estonian Dorpat and partook in Russian expeditions to Central Asia. At the turn of the century the explorer of Hotan, the Hungarian Marc Aurel Stein, taught at British Indian universities and became a British citizen, and the Danish Ny Carlsberg foundation funded excavations of the Brit-

the British viceroy and frequent consultation of the British Museum collections in London was thus not out of the ordinary. Looking at the sources and reception of Rosen's scholarly publications equally, an integrated European scholarly space appears. Omar Khayyam studies, for instance, formatively involved studies coming out of Russian, English, Danish and German academia, and were by the 1920s enlarged to an academic discourse involving Iranian and Indian contributors.

Rosen was not alone in noting the names of Indian and Iranian contributors already in his early publications from the 1890s. Parallel to the splintering of European international Orientalist discourse into its components after the war scholars from the lands considered Oriental intensified their participation, while the research of European scholars found more and more entry in newly emerging national history writings. In reading the life stories and the intellectual labours of these Iranians, Indians, Turks, Arabs or Ethiopians – who are often still mostly studied in national histories or area studies – and the circumstances of their encounters and interactions with Rosen, not only does the genealogy of contents in Rosen's publications become clearer, but it also portrays the agency and own scholarly and political predispositions figures such as Safi 'Ali Shah,

ish Egyptologist Flinders Petrie in Egypt, with artefacts finding their way back to Copenhagen. David Arnold, "Globalization and Contingent Colonialism: Towards a Transnational History of 'British' India," *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 16, no. 2 (2015); Ulrike Kirchberger, *Aspekte deutsch-britischer Expansion. Die Überseeinteressen der deutschen Migranten in Großbritannien in der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1999); Ray Desmond, *The European Discovery of the Indian Flora* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); Lothar Burchardt, "The School of Oriental Languages at the University of Berlin – Forging the Cadres of German Imperialism?" in *Science Across the European Empires, 1800–1950*, Benedikt Stuchtey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 63–105; Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 143–44, 190; Valentina Stache-Rosen, *German Indologists. Biographies of Scholars in Indian Studies Writing in German. With a Summary on Indology in German Speaking Countries* (Delhi: Max Mueller Bhavan, 1981); Sten Konow, "Obituary Notices. Vilhelm Thomsen," *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 4 (October 1927): 930; Jeannette Mirsky, *Sir Aurel Stein: Archaeological Explorer* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Bagh Tine, "The Petrie Project at the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek," *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 69, no. 1–2 (2012): 5–12; Jürgen Osterhammel, *Die Verwandlung der Welt. Eine Geschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2013), 1133–45; Jan Rüger, "Writing Europe Into the History of the British Empire," in *History After Hobsbawm. Writing the Past for the Twenty-First Century*, John H. Arnold, Matthew Hilton, and Jan Rüger (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 46; Kris Manjappa, *Age of Entanglement. German and Indian Intellectuals Across Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 5.

Zahir ed-Dowleh, ‘Emad ed-Dowleh, Sheikh Hassan, Taqi Erani and Menelik II brought to bear.⁷⁶

These interactions were not devoid of power-relations but the disciplining of the other was not their dominant feature. As Trautmann noted in *Aryans and British India*, the nowadays much employed Hegelian binary of self versus other was preceded by a Durkheimian “segmentary notion” that “assumes sameness (kinship) which it then partitions along a calculus of distance”.⁷⁷ For Rosen and his interlocutors, distance was a matter of physical and mental position. Scholarship, seeking for answers and truth, and the learning from one another could open spaces in which politics played second fiddle, or bring together “kin” in the pursuit of common goals, even if approached from different vantage points. “Sameness” was also a matter of class for the proudly non-noble “Bürger” (burgher/bourgeois) Rosen, just as “social ranking” structured the “construction of affinities” often more than “racial othering”, as Cannadine observed for the British Empire. The exotic was domesticated by “comprehending and the reordering of the foreign in parallel, analogous, equivalent, resemblant terms.”⁷⁸ While Germans and German empire came into the world often through Britain and learning British hierarchical ways, the opportunities German Weltpolitik in the Orient offered were particularly attractive for the German middle classes, finding reflection also in Germany’s heavily bourgeois diplomatic staff in the Orient. Quite naturally Rosen sought out and cooperated best and most profoundly with officials and intellectuals between India, Iran, the Ottoman Empire, Germany and Britain, who were like himself, more or less well-to-do but not equipped with the social and physical capital of the aristocracy. Despite these framing con-

76 Nile Green, “A Persian Sufi in British India: The Travels of Mirzā Ḥasan Šafi ‘Alī Shāh (1251/1835–1316/1899),” *Journal of Persian Studies* 42 (2004): 201–18; Nile Green, “Saints, Rebels and Booksellers; Sufis in the Cosmopolitan Western Indian Ocean, Ca. 1780–1920,” in *Struggling with History; Islam and Cosmopolitanism in the Eastern Indian Ocean*, Edward Simpson and Kai Kresse (London: Hurst, 2007), 125–66; Roman Seidel, *Kant in Teheran: Anfänge, Ansätze und Kontexte der Kantrezeption in Iran* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014); Lloyd Ridgeon, “Revolution and a High-Ranking Sufi: Zahir al-Dowleh’s Contribution to the Constitutional Movement,” in *Iran’s Constitutional Revolution. Popular Politics, Cultural Transformations and Transnational Connections*, H.E. Chehabi and Vanessa Martin (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 143–62; Richard Pankhurst, “Menelik and the Foundation of Addis Ababa,” *Journal of African History* 2, no. 1 (1961): 103–17; Harold G. Marcus, *The Life and Times of Menelik II. Ethiopia 1844–1913* (Lawrenceville: Red Sea Press, 1995).

77 Thomas R. Trautmann, *Aryans and British India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 9–10.

78 David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism. How the British Saw Their Empire* (London: Penguin, 2001), xix, 8.

ditions influencing Rosen's thought and actions, they do not fully explain the breaks and changes in conceiving of and engaging with "the Orient" viewed through Rosen's travails between politics and scholarship, as the search for enlightenment never ended, the seekers of knowledge never stayed the same and the learned changed the pursuers in their quest.

Throughout Rosen's diplomatic interactions with Iran, the Ottoman Empire, Ethiopia, and Morocco, political action was often not initiated by the German side. Only a recent nation-state finding its own way into modernity in the face of established French, British and Russian empires, Germany pursued a foreign policy without overt territorial interests in much of the Orient. This made Germany attractive to extra-European countries as a model of emulation, a potential partner for economic and military development, and as a powerful state actor, which if drawn into one's affairs, promised to be a deterrent against imperial encroachments of other European states. Following in the footsteps of Ahmad's 1992 critique of Said's *Orientalism* as only speaking about the cases of Western imposed silencing of those in the East, Said's 1993 *Culture and Empire* that underlined the significance of analysing representations of the foreign in European cultures, and Jasanoff's *Edge of Empire* that read the "stories of imperial collectors [as showing] how much the process of cultural encounter involved crossing and mixing, as well as separation and division" and in due course shaping empires all the way from the peripheries to the core, Manjapra opens a particularly useful approach to German connections with the extra-European world⁷⁹:

In the Wilhelmine and Weimar era, Germans sought to inscribe themselves on the world, not only through formal imperialism, but also through more informal alliances with the anti-colonial activists within rival empires, often through cultural diplomacy and the contribution of 'soft weapons', such as military methods and German science. During the same period, coloured nationalists, including African Americans, Turks, Persians, Indians, Japanese, Chinese and others, perceived in German-speaking Europe an alternative centre of world power, industrial strength and theoretical science that could help leverage resistance to western European global hegemony... The most important story to tell here... is not about the spread of abstract resemblances or concepts of aesthetics, but about the way politically-interested groups tried both to break down ideas of difference and to erect barriers against sameness in their entanglements together.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Said largely excluded the non-Muslim and non-Arab regions of that geographic construct Orient as non-constitutive for European Orientalism. Lockman, *History and Politics of Orientalism*, 198, 207; Said, *Orientalism*, 17; Maya Jasanoff, *Edge of Empire. Lives, Culture, and Conquest in the East, 1750–1850* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005), 7.

⁸⁰ Kris Manjapra, "Reflections. Transnational Approaches to Global History: A View from the Study of German-Indian Entanglement," *German History* 32, no. 2 (2014): 289, 292–93.

In order to pursue such a multi-centric and fragmented approach in a history along the life of Friedrich Rosen, the national or rather the distinctive re-emerges and requires the embedding of Rosen next to an entangled “German base”⁸¹ into Persianate, Iranian, British, Indian, Ottoman, Moroccan and Ethiopian contexts. Often returning to Rosen’s anchor points of Germany and the Persianate world, this study then also hopes to contribute to the wider connected global history of nationalism and nation formations during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries amid and in response to the transformation and integration of the world that Osterhammel and Conrad have described.⁸²

While the temporal focus of this study is on the period of the German Kaiserreich, that is from 1871 to 1918, Rosen’s story begins to speak to the relationship of scholarship and politics directly only by 1886. His childhood and socialisation into the family of a scholar-consul in Prussian service in the mid-century Ottoman Empire offers a useful if confined backdrop of pre-imperial Germany’s affairs with the Orient. The family generations that came before Rosen touches

81 In this sense this study is part of several studies that read Germany entangled and paralleling transnationally. Amongst them in particular the contributions to Sebastian Conrad’s and Jürgen Osterhammel’s edited volume *Das Kaiserreich transnational. Deutschland in der Welt 1871–1914*. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006).

82 Conrad recently observed that global history is “currently booming”. In introducing her history of German-Turkish relations Mangold-Will protested against the “Totalerklärungsanspruch” (claim of total explanation) of global history and advocated the national as a base unit of analysis from which the transnational only arises. Amid the “Nation-X First” ideologies espoused of late, Adelman questioned, if global history was not an undue celebration of border-crossings, cosmopolitanism and essentially a reflection of an elitist neo-liberal globalisation ideology that nationalism now tries to scale back. I tend towards a reading of the global that perceives of and seeks out differences and does not presuppose global integration and or a long European preponderance as a moral imperative but as an empirical phenomenon, provoking varied responses around the world. To quote Conrad again: “The most fascinating questions are often those that arise at the intersection between global processes and their local manifestations.” Global history is understood here as a corrective to the distorting limitations of what Wimmer and Glick Schiller call “methodological nationalism”. “The Orient” after all so amorphous a concept in time and space an a priori national rooting appears implausible. Sabine Mangold-Will, *Begrenzte Freundschaft. Deutschland und die Türkei, 1918–1933*. (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2013), 13; Sebastian Conrad, *What Is Global History?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 1, 129; Jeremy Adelman, “What is Global History Now? Historians Cheered Globalism with Work About Cosmopolitans and Border-Crossing, but the Power of Place Never Went Away,” *Aeon*, 2 March 2017. <https://aeon.co/essays/is-global-history-still-possible-or-has-it-had-its-moment>; Andreas Wimmer and Nina Glick Schiller, “Methodological Nationalism, the Social Sciences, and the Study of Migration. An Essay in Historical Epistemology,” *International Migration Review* 37, no. 3 (2003): 576–610; Richard Drayton and David Motadel, “Discussion: The Futures of Global History,” *Global History* 13, no. 1 (2018).

on the history of early European Oriental philology starting around 1800, the history of the principality of Lippe in German and European relations, and the history of Jewish emancipation in the arts. In order to situate Rosen along his diplomatic stations and analyse his interactions, further time windows along localities and regions become necessary. The neighbourhood of Rosen's childhood in Jerusalem had a formative history going back to the fifteenth century. His university studies throw a light on the development of Orient-philological studies and their place in German society in the second half of the nineteenth century. Rosen's stay in India and his doctoral work on Hindustani theatre is embedded in a history of late Awadh and British India along its theatrical productions. Rosen's engagements in 1890s Tehran only take on shape when understood in the context of the close of the nearly fifty-year reign of Naser ed-Din Shah and towards the end of the Qajar dynasty. His encounters with Sufism require delineation of the Safi 'Ali Shahiyya of the Ni'matollahi order in its history between Safavid Iran, Indian exile and Tehran at the verge of the introduction of constitutionalism. The same goes for Rosen's participation in philosophical circles that re-engaged with the writings of Safavid metaphysics in a quest for an Iranian modernity. Rosen's own studies of Qajar, Zend, and Safavid history, as well as his infatuation with tenth to fourteenth century Persian poetry necessitates further excursions to situate his translations and knowledge productions. Finally, Rosen's retirement provides a view into how knowledge gathered and produced in imperial times was re-embedded in nationalist discourses between Germany and Iran in the interwar period.

For Rosen Europe was modern, but as railways, telegraphs, products of mechanisation and scientific methods reached ever more corners of the Orient, he found modernity replacing what he would for Iran, Morocco and Mesopotamia call the medieval and for Palestine the medieval Biblical. While allowing for change over time, an inherent part of this thinking about history, as with much historicism at the time, was an often recurring dimension of time-flattening. The medieval Islamic cultures, which Rosen believed to have personally witnessed in Iran, Fez and Jerusalem, were the carriers of antique Greek philosophy, Indian culture and spirituality, as well as the influences of other antique cultures. Thus, the temporal categories of antique, medieval and modern had spatial components and were as such two-dimensional and malleable. Frightening to Rosen was the quick adaptation of a supposedly uniform European modernity that would destroy the idiosyncrasies of the different places, cultures, religions and societies of the medieval Orient, and replace them with a grey-on-grey mish-mash tuned to the beat of timetables. The First World War marked break in Rosen's thinking. His response to the perceived inevitability of this process of European expansion had before the war been to focus on preserving the supposed-

ly original. After the war, Rosen expanded on thoughts of “organic development” in countries like Iran. Modernity had arrived, but it would only work if it was sprouting from its specific, national medieval roots.

Chapter 1

Consul's Son. From Jerusalem Childhood to Lonely Adolescence in Germany

1 Five Year-old Suleiman

On the occasion of his fifth birthday in 1861 little Suleiman was gifted a black, Cairene donkey by his father.¹ The mountainous landscape of the Jerusalem sanjak (Ottoman administrative district) made riding on horseback or donkey a necessity in pre-railway days. From that day on, every morning before breakfast Suleiman rode on his “most loved companion” through the alleys of Jerusalem and into the country outside the city walls, following the lead of his father’s groom Hajji Bekir. Hajji Bekir, as his name suggests, had made the Hajj to Mecca and on his way back to his native Darfur had stayed on in Jerusalem, like a number of other Darfuris, who had settled in Jerusalem and become known as the Takruris (after Takrur, a Western African kingdom of Muslim belief).² Bekir on an Arab horse, dressed all in white and armed with a bell-mouthed blunderbuss and a wooden mace, was there to protect Suleiman. The surroundings of Jerusalem were unsafe on account of roaming bandits, wolfs, hyenas and scorpions.³ Suleiman and Bekir rode through the crisp morning air of the city. Leaving through Jaffa Gate, they passed a vast red-blossoming butne terebinthe tree, which served as a meeting point for women taking a break from their chores “taht el butne” (under the butne), and rode into the surrounding hill sites. Bekir lectured Suleiman on the customs and animals of Darfur.⁴ Suleiman was impressed with sto-

1 Hanns-Peter Fink, “Kindheit und Jugend des Diplomaten und Orientalisten Friedrich Rosen (1856–1935),” *Lippische Mitteilungen aus Geschichte und Landeskunde* 76 (2007): 132; Georg Rosen to Sophie Klingemann, 9 October 1861, Nr. 68, D 72 Rosen-Klingemann, LAV NRW OWL.

2 Africans of varying backgrounds were often lumped together in European and Ottoman records. A German newspaper reported in 1897 that the “Sudanese often stay here several years to learn Arabic and study the Quran... While renting themselves out as field or gate keepers and prove to be loyal and reliable people. After having acquired enough knowledge of Arabic and the Quran they ... return home with the money they have earned on the side. To all appearances these pilgrims become zealous apostles of Islam among the heathen tribes of the upper Niger and Nile lands and the Great Lakes.” Adar Arnon, “The Quarters of Jerusalem in the Ottoman Period,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 28, no. 1 (1992): 38; Alex Carmel, *Palästina-Chronik. 1883 bis 1914. Deutsche Zeitungsberichte von der ersten jüdischen Einwanderungswelle bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg* (Langenau-Ulm: Armin Vaas, 1978), 196–97.

3 Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories of a German Diplomatist* (New York: Dutton, 1930), 10.

4 Friedrich Rosen, 1926, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte I*, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 17.

ries about the African wild ass of his guide's home.⁵ On one of their jaunts into the Judean hills surrounding Jerusalem they saw a flock of migratory birds which both recognised immediately, Bekir from Darfur and Suleiman from a book on natural history in his father's library. Proud of his knowledge, Suleiman told Bekir that these birds fly all the way to Europe. When they returned home that day, he showed Bekir pictures of these birds:

He looked at them for a long time, and at last declared that none of these birds ever came to Sudan. This astonished me, for the pictures were very clear and bright in colour.

'But don't you recognize these?' said I, pointing to a stork and a crane.

'All birds in my home,' said he, 'have two sides, and these only have one. No such birds exist in Africa.'

Looking back on this episode some seventy years later Suleiman remarked, that "this illustrates how recognition of a pictured object is founded on convention, and is an acquired faculty." Soon after, Bekir started drawing pictures of sceneries of feluccas on the Nile. Suleiman's mother, an avid painter, provided the tools.⁶

The neighbourhood, in which Suleiman grew up, was named 'Aqbat at-Takiyyah after its main site, the takiyyah, a Sufi congregation.⁷ The keeper of the takiyyah was a man with "long, fair, matted hair" and his son Arif was a playmate of Suleiman. There was the shop of Sheikh Ahmad, his green sayyid turban denoting his descent from the prophet Muhammad. Ahmad produced flutes (the shibbabe) from reeds, which he brought up from the Jordan valley with his donkey. One of these flutes he gave to Suleiman – when an old man, Suleiman counted it as his oldest possession.⁸ The splendourous house opposite that of Suleiman's family was that of a most prominent man in town, Muhammad Efendi Khalidi. His father-in-law, Musa, had been Ottoman qadiasker (chief judge) of

5 Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 10.

6 Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 11; Friedrich Rosen, 1926, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte I*, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 7.

7 The neighbourhood 'Aqbat at-Takiyyah (literally: incline of the dwelling place) was also known as 'Aqbat as-Sitt (incline of the lady), after a building erected there in the fourteenth century by the Mamluk woman Tunshuq al-al-Muzaffariyya, and in the sixteenth century established as an Ottoman imperial soup kitchen by "Roxanna" Hurrem Sultan, wife of Süleyman I. Walid Khalidi, Written communication to author, 10 May 2016; Amy Singer, *Constructing Ottoman Beneficence. An Imperial Soup Kitchen in Jerusalem* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2002), 1–3; Arnon, "Jerusalem in the Ottoman Period," 15; Simon Sebag Montefiore, *Jerusalem. The Biography* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2011), 292–93.

8 Friedrich Rosen, "Hinterlassene Manuskripte I," 6–7; Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 14.

Anatolia, the “pinnacle of achievement within Ottoman religious bureaucracy” and second only to the Mufti of Constantinople, Sheikh ül-Islam.⁹

Muhammad lived in retirement with his wife Sitt Aisha and another relative, Sitt Salma. Suleiman’s mother and Sitt Salma were on friendly terms, often spending time together. Sitting in cushion corners in the hall of mirrors of the Khalidis, chandeliers above, music boxes around and the floor covered in fine straw-mats, little Suleiman played, as dishes of chicken, rice and sweetmeats were handed to the women by servants.¹⁰ Sitt Salma and Sitt Aisha returned the visits. They were impressed with the “magnanimity and forbearance” Suleiman’s mother put on display when she did not hit a maid who had broken a cup. Before Suleiman could remember Sitt Salma had given him the breast, making him milk-brothers with her son Ismail.¹¹ Suleiman was the name by which Sitt Salma would call her milk-son still, when he returned to Jerusalem a grown man and consul of the German empire a good forty years later.¹² To many others and himself his first name was mostly Friedrich, or for English speakers Fritz.

9 In Rosen’s memories Muhammad and Musa are mixed up. The estate and the house had been that of Musa and established as a waqf dhurri (family endowment) during his time as high Ottoman official and thus maintained the name of its founder. Musa died at Antioch in 1832. The house at ‘Aqbat at-Takiyyah was occupied by Muhammad during the period of the Rosens’ residence in Jerusalem. Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity. The Construction of Modern National Consciousness* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 38; Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 12–14; Raja Khalidi, Written communication, 26 April 2016; Hazem Khalidi, Khalidi Family Tree, 1970s, Sa’ad Khalidi Private Collection.

10 “Female slaves” is what Rosen called these servants in his memoirs. This is erroneous. Domestic help in the households of the notable Jerusalemite families was provided by maids, who were sent by their parents in the countryside to learn household skills before marriage or to earn a dowry. Some stayed with the families indefinitely. Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 13; Geoffrey Warren Furlonge, *Palestine is My Country: The Story of Musa Alami* (New York: Praeger, 1969), 23.

11 Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 268.

12 Friendships between women across ethno-religious lines in Jerusalem were not uncommon. The Palestinian nationalist politician Musa Alami recounted that his family was close friends with a Jewish family from Aleppo, when he was a child. The Alamis were at their home almost every night, “and it was thought quite natural that not only he, but several of his contemporaries... should have had Jewish ‘foster-brothers’ at birth.” The Israeli politician of Jerusalemite Jewish background Eliyahu Eliachar also recounted that when he was young women and their toddlers would visit each other regardless of religion or ethnicity. As Pullan summarises, “much of Old City life had been characterised by intersections in everyday activities by individuals and groups from different ethnic and religious backgrounds and by overlapping physical situations in streets, markets, cafes and even in some aspects of domestic accommodation.” Furlonge, *Palestine is My Country*, 28; Eliyahu Eliachar, *Lehiyot ‘im Falastininim [in Hebrew]* (Jerusalem: Misgav Yerushalayim, 1997), 69–70; Wendy Pullan, “Moments of Transformation in the

In an essay on a panegyric poem, the Shafi'i Mufti in Jerusalem Muhammad Asad had versified to honour the Prussian king Friedrich Wilhelm IV in 1859, Friedrich's father Georg Rosen had noted that the Prussian king was much appreciated in Palestine for his social works and widely known as Suleiman. Suleiman, in Arabic سليمان (from the word سلام: peace) translates into "the peaceful", also corresponding to the Biblical Solomon, in Hebrew Shlomo, שלמה. Both conform to the name Friedrich, which combines the old-German words Friedu, meaning peace, and rihhi, meaning powerful, rich or prince – so "prince of peace".¹³ Suleiman equally resonated in reminiscence of Suleiman the Magnificent (1494–1566), who had vastly expanded the Ottoman Empire and given Jerusalem its contemporary architectural shape.¹⁴ Living in Jerusalem, it made sense for the Prussian consul to give his son Friedrich the Arabic sobriquet Suleiman. And the name stuck. When in intimate settings, Friedrich would go by the name سليمان روزن (Suleiman Rosen) throughout his life.¹⁵

2 Socialisation between Jerusalem and Germany

What did Friedrich Rosen's childhood as the son of the Prussian consul Georg Rosen and the artistic Serena Moscheles in 1850s and 1860s Ottoman Jerusalem look like? To probe and grasp Rosen's subsequent political choices and intellec-

Urban Order of Jerusalem," in *Routledge Handbook on Jerusalem*, Suleiman A. Mourad, Naomi Koltun-Fromm, and Bedross Der Matossian (London: Routledge, 2019), 226.

13 Georg Rosen Arabised his first name as Hareth حارث, with the meaning of plowman, as a direct translation of the meaning of Georgios in Greek: earth worker. He also occasionally used the nom de plume Hareth Wardi, with Wardi the Arabic for Rosen. Georg Rosen, "König Friedrich Wilhelm IV. im Munde eines arabischen Dichters," *Wochenblatt des Johanniter-Ordens Balley Brandenburg* 29 (15 July 1863): 178; Asad, Muhammad, Kasside des Scheichs Muhammed Ass'ad, Mufti zu Jerusalem und Imam der Aksa-Moschee, verfasst anlässlich eines Besuchs des Verlegers Heinrich Brockhaus bei Georg Rosen in Jerusalem, 1858, 45, D 72 Rosen-Klingemann, LAV NRW OWL; H. Wardi [Georg Rosen], *Serbien in seinen politischen Beziehungen insbesondere zu Rußland. Ein historischer Essay* (Leipzig: J.A. Barth, 1877).

14 Yuval Ben-Basat and Johann Buessow, "Ottoman Jerusalem, 1517–1918," in *Routledge Handbook on Jerusalem*, Suleiman A. Mourad, Naomi Koltun-Fromm, and Bedross Der Matossian (London: Routledge, 2019), 113.

15 Georg Rosen to Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer, 11 May 1859, NKS 2969, 4°, KB – HA; Georg Rosen, "Friedrich Wilhelm im Munde eines arabischen Dichters"; Heinrich Brockhaus, *Tagebücher 1857 bis 1858. Reisen im Orient*, Hartmut Bobzin and Jens Kutscher (Erlangen: Filos, 2005); Suleiman Rosen to Nina Rosen, 26 January 1894, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen, 1898, Hinterlassene Manuskripte II, 7 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 27 February 1905, ASWPC.

tual-scholarly interests across three continents, it is important to sketch out what normalcy was for him. What formed his self-understanding during his childhood? Which skills and predispositions did he acquire from his family, friends and teachers? What were formative encounters, episodes and periods as a son of a consul in the Holy Land of the mid-nineteenth century and in rural Germany? What did he come to love and desire? What did he abhor? Where were the breaks and transitions from Jerusalem childhood to young adult trying and failing to make his way in European academia in the 1870s and 1880s? When Rosen became active in Orient scholarship and politics in later years, these framings of the mind and soul would come to the fore time and again in shaping his actions.

3 A Family of Orientalists

Georg Rosen (1820–1891) was Prussian consul in Jerusalem from 1853 to 1867. He hailed from a family of Protestant burghers in the western German residence town of Detmold in the principality of Lippe. Georg's father Friedrich Ballhorn-Rosen (1774–1855)¹⁶ had been engaged by Princess Pauline of Lippe to teach her children and later took on the position of chancellor of her administration of the

¹⁶ In 1921, the Verein zur Abwehr des Antisemitismus pointed out that, despite antisemitic murmurs of the “Jewish sounding” name Rosen, the name's origin was tied to the principality of Lippe. With permission of Princess Pauline, Friedrich Ernst Ballhorn changed the family name to Rosen. The reason behind the Lippe's name change is shrouded in mystery. The word Ballhorn in German is close to the rather unflattering *verballhornen*, which means to spoof or jive. The rose was the symbol of the principality of Lippe, but there is no indication that the inspiration came from the heraldry of a princess, with whom the chancellor shared a professional relationship based on mutual esteem. Ballhorn, whose father had died two years after his birth, worked as a house teacher for Diederik Johann von Hogendorp (1754–1803) in Amsterdam and at Leiden from about 1800 to 1802. The Hogendorps entertained relations with Charles Servais de Rosen (1746–1828) and it is possible that Charles de Rosen supported the semi-orphaned Ballhorn. Johannes Tütken, *Privatdozenten im Schatten der Georgia Augusta. Zur älteren Privatdozentur (1734 bis 1831)*, Biographische Materialien zu den Privatdozenten des Sommersemesters 1812 (Göttingen: Universitätsverlag Göttingen, 2005), 543–48; Friedrich Ballhorn to Johannes Henricus van der Palm, April 1801, LTK 1567 A//F, UBL; John Töpfer, Written communication, 24 June 2017; “De Rosen,” *Nederland's Adelsboek* 91 (2004–5): 470–78; Georg Eisenhardt, “Zum Leben der ‘feinen Leute’ in Detmold,” in *Lippe im Vormärz. Von bothmäßigen Unterthanen und unbothmäßigen Demokraten*, Erhard Wiersing and Hermann Niebuhr (Bielefeld: Aistehsis, 1990), 229; Agnes Stache-Weiske, ed., *Welche tolle Zeiten erleben wir! Die Briefe des lippischen Kanzlers Friedrich Ernst Ballhorn-Rosen und seinen Sohn Georg in Konstantinopel 1847–1851* (Detmold: Lippische Geschichtsquellen, 1999), VII–IX.

principality.¹⁷ Ballhorn-Rosen's first son and half-brother of Georg, Friedrich August Rosen (1805–1837), had during the initial Sanskrit enthusiasm in Europe studied linguistics with the eminent Sanskritist Franz Bopp in Berlin. After Ballhorn-Rosen had taken on the study of the ancient Indian language at the ripe age of sixty-four, the epic Sanskrit *Mahabharata* became next to John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Dante Alighieri's *La Divina Commedia* and Homer's *Odyssey* – all to be read in the original – stock items of parental education in the Ballhorn-Rosen household in Detmold. After the premature death of Friedrich August at the age of 32 in London, where he was a professor for Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit and Hindustani, his brother Georg took on the torch of Oriental studies in the Rosen family.¹⁸ Georg Rosen studied Sanskrit with Bopp as well, Persian with Friedrich Rückert, Armenian with Julius Petermann and Arabic with Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer – the grandees of early German Oriental studies between Berlin and Leipzig. In 1843 Georg Rosen completed his doctoral dissertation *Elementa Persica*, a Persian grammar book. Through his late brother and Ernst Helwing, a Berlin-based professor of Lippean origin and friend of father Ballhorn-Rosen, Georg gained entry to the circles of Alexander von Humboldt, who deemed Rosen to be “fabulously erudite”.¹⁹ On his recommendation Rosen

17 Pauline zur Lippe (1769–1820) was regent of the principality of Lippe from 1802 until 1820. She maintained Lippe's independence from Prussian, French and Hessian overlordship during the Napoleonic wars, abolished serfdom, and in 1802 established the first kindergarten in German lands. Hans Kiewning, *Fürstin Pauline zur Lippe 1769–1820* (Detmold: Verlag der Meyerschen Hofbuchhandlung, 1930); Rainer Springhorn, ed., *Lippisches Landesmuseum Detmold. Die Schausammlungen* (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2007), 86–88.

18 Ballhorn-Rosen first introduced his son Friedrich August in Sanskrit and father and son continued to read Sanskrit together. Friedrich Rosen was one of the first European scholars to study Vedic texts, believing that “the character and genius of Indian language and literature could only be completely understood by tracing them back to the earliest periods, to which the Vedas belong”. He published his dissertation *Corporis radicum Sanscritarum prolusio* in 1826 and *Radices Sanscritae* a year later. His categorisations and classifications stimulated the study of Sanskrit and Indo-European languages across Europe. In 1828 he moved to London and enjoyed access to the rich availability of Eastern manuscripts in the city. He started work on a complete translation with explanatory notes and word index of the Rigveda, but death prevented the completion of his work. The Orientalist community mourned the premature departure of his rare talent. Alfred Bergmann, “Das geistige und kulturelle Leben,” in *Geschichte der Stadt Detmold*, Naturwissenschaftlicher und historischer Verein für das Land Lippe (Detmold: Maximilian-Verlag, 1953), 259; Stache-Rosen, *German Indologists*, 25–26; Stache-Weiske, *Welche tolle Zeiten erleben wir!*, XI–XV; Rosane Rocher and Agnes Stache-Weiske, *For the Sake of the Vedas: The Anglo-German Life of Friedrich Rosen, 1805–1837* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2020).

19 Sari Abdallah Efendi, *Tuti-Nameh. Das Papageienbuch. Nach der türkischen Fassung übersetzt*, trans. Georg Rosen (Leipzig: Insel-Verlag, 1913), 422.

was sent on an expedition financed by the Berlin Academy of Sciences to the Caucasus to explore the origins and family relations of Caucasian languages.²⁰ Next to his essays on Ossetian and Laz, which established a linguistic connection to the Basque languages, Rosen became friends with the poet Friedrich von Bodenstedt in then Russian Tiflis. Bodenstedt introduced Rosen to Mirza Shafi Wazeh, who had founded a literary society in the same year and was a Sufi sceptical of orthodox religion. Wazeh became Rosen's Persian teacher.²¹

Upon Rosen's return to Germany, it was also Humboldt who, contrary to Klemens von Metternich's infamous utterance "among the subalterns that I appoint to ministerial posts I can use neither superior intellect nor special knowledge; I need characterless machines", was instrumental in facilitating Rosen's posting as dragoman to the Prussian legation at Constantinople in 1844.²² On a home visit in Berlin in 1852, Georg Rosen was introduced to King Friedrich Wilhelm IV, who had heard of the dragoman's scholarship and ability to converse in Ottoman Turkish, Persian and Arabic. Friedrich Wilhelm decided to make Rosen consul in Jerusalem to look after the Anglo-Prussian Protestant Bishopric and be Prussia's

20 Alexander von Humboldt to Johann Albrecht Friedrich Eichhorn, 9 June 1844, copy, ASWPC.

21 The work of the Persian-Azeri bilingual Shafi Wazeh was popularised in Europe in Bodenstedt's translation as *Die Lieder des Mirza Schaffy*. He had sold Shafi Wazeh in Europe as a poet comparable in Eastern repute to Hafez and Sa'di. When Russian Orientalists arrived in Iran several years later and found that no one had heard of Shafi Wazeh, Bodenstedt was forced to clarify that they were all his own poems. More consequentially, Wazeh was also the teacher of Mirza Fath-Ali Akhundzadeh, the early Iranian ultra-nationalist, advocate of materialism and atheism and pioneering hater of Arabs. Hamid Algar, "Du'l-Lesānāyn," in *Encyclopædia Iranica* (1996). <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/dul-lesanayn>; Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Die Lieder des Mirza-Schaffy* (Berlin: Deckerschen Geheimen Ober-Hofbuchdruckerei, 1851); Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Erinnerungen aus meinem Leben*, 2 (Berlin: Allgemeiner Verein für deutsche Literatur, 1888), 291–92; Arthur F.J. Remy, "The Influence of India and Persia on the Poetry of Germany" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1901), 64–71; Friedrich Rosen, *Persien in Wort und Bild. Mit 165 meist ganzseitigen Bildern und einer Landkarte*, Die Welt in Wort und Bild (Berlin: Franz Schneider, 1926), 246; Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Tausendundein Tag im Orient*, Carsten-Michael Walbiner (Frankfurt: Societäts-Verlag, 1992), 302–8; Reza Zia-Ebrahimi, *The Emergence of Iranian Nationalism: Race and the Politics of Dislocation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018), 44.

22 As Goren described, the Prussian government pursued a policy of sending scholars to the Eastern Mediterranean to take care of scholarly and political tasks, with the goal of expanding Oriental collections in Berlin and knowledge of the East more generally. Bismarck later reversed this line of policy and thought Metternich's utilitarian approach more useful. Goren, "The Scholar Precedes the Diplomat," 45–51; Alexander von Humboldt to Johann Albrecht Friedrich Eichhorn, 9 June 1844, Copy, ASWPC; Internal Note, 12 December 1850, 2999, Personalakten 12583, PA AA; Sari Abdallah Efendi, *Tuti-Nameh*, 427.

eyes and ears in the city that was gaining in significance for European powers.²³ In 1853 Georg Rosen replaced the first Prussian consul Gustav Schulz, who had died the year before.²⁴

4 His Mother and the Social Glue of the Arts

Friedrich Rosen's mother was Serena Moscheles, the daughter of Ignaz Moscheles and Charlotte Embden. Charlotte Embden was the daughter of the Hamburg banker Abraham Adolph Embden (1780–1855) and Serena Dellevie (1782–1818), and a cousin of the poet Heinrich Heine. Ignaz Moscheles was born in 1794 to a German-speaking Jewish family of merchants and scholars in Prague.²⁵ At an early age he showed talent as a pianist. At fourteen, Moscheles moved to Vienna, where he worked with the likes of Beethoven, Kalkbrenner and Meyerbeer at the time of Vienna's congress diplomacy. Moscheles and his wife settled in London in the early 1830s, where he became co-director of the Royal Philharmonic Society in 1832. Despite remaining close to the Jewish community and musicians of Jewish origins, such as Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, the Moscheles were baptised in the Anglican Church in the early 1830s.²⁶ On the invitation of his friend Mendelssohn Bartholdy, Moscheles took up teaching at the conservatory that Mendelssohn had established in Leipzig in 1846. After Mendelssohn Bartholdy's death in 1847 Moscheles continued to direct its affairs.

Serena Moscheles was born in London on 30 March 1830 and baptised in the Anglican Church.²⁷ Like Moscheles' other children, Emily, Felix and Clara, Sere-

23 In a letter Humboldt relayed to Rosen the king's opinion that "no one would be more fitting for this place that is now being visited by so many highly educated travellers". Christian von Bunsen, a former diplomat and driving force behind the Prussian presence in Jerusalem and Anglo-Prussian collaboration in the extra-European world, also weighed in on Rosen's behalf. Alexander von Humboldt to Georg Rosen, 8 December 1851, copy, ASWPC; Lückhoff, *Anglikaner und Protestanten im Heiligen Land*, 52–60; Hänsel, "Friedrich Wilhelm IV and Prussian Interests in the Middle East," 19–21; Yaron Perry, *British Mission to the Jews in Nineteenth-Century Palestine* (London: Routledge, 2003), 83–84; Kirchberger, *Aspekte deutsch-britischer Expansion*, 353, 386.

24 Internal Note, 9 July 1852 Personalakten 12583, PA AA; Note to Louis von Wildenbruch, 13 March 1852, 672. 1151. 1163, Personalakten 12583, PA AA.

25 Henry J. Roche, *The Ancestors, Descendants and Relatives of Ignaz and Charlotte Moscheles*, May 1974, Family Tree, HRPC.

26 Mark Kroll, *Ignaz Moscheles and the Changing World of Musical Europe* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2014), 334–35.

27 Henry Charles Bell, 11 April 1833, Extract from Baptism Register, 4017, Personalakten 12583, PA AA.

na became a musician, singing in chorus with her sister Emily at their father's performance of *Elijah* in 1848.²⁸ Like her brother Felix, an early speaker of Esperanto across Europe famous artist, Serena was a talented painter.²⁹ On a home visit to Germany in 1853, Georg Rosen stopped over at his alma mater in Leipzig. In London, Georg's brother Friedrich August had been moving in the circles of Karl Klingemann, a Hanoverian diplomat and poet, who had been friends with the Moscheles family there.³⁰ When Georg called on the Moscheles family in Leipzig, he fell in love with Serena, courting her with a poem by Hafez in Persian and in German translation:

Stilles Glück verlangst Du, Hafez?
Sieh Dich vor und nicht vergiss es!
'Fandest Du was Du gesucht, lass
Fahren die Welt, – erfass es!'³¹

Quiet happiness you desire, Hafez?
Watch yourself and don't forget it!
'Have you found what you searched for, let go
of the world, – seize/understand it!'

Serena said yes. An exhilarating trip for Georg, followed by several months of a distance relationship, culminating in marriage on 1 March 1854. A plethora of holiday requests to the foreign ministry detailed his dedication.³² Rosen managed to postpone his departure to Jerusalem in the winter of 1853/4 by several months, explaining to his superiors in Berlin that Serena made the ideal wife

28 Kroll, *Ignaz Moscheles and the Changing World of Musical Europe*, 155; Henry J. Roche, "Roche-Moscheles Family Tree," Descendants of Jean Antoine (Antonin) Roche and Emily Mary Moscheles (Mumi), July 1978 HRPC.

29 When Felix Moscheles, namesake of Friedrich's youngest brother Felix, died in 1917 *The Nation* eulogized the painter in an obituary: "A German and a Jew, I suppose he stood apart, in thought and in character from Jewish or German materialism as Lessing himself or the noble figure that grew out of Lessing's brain, Nathan the Wise... I do know that he would be ranked as a great artist, his portrait of his beloved Mazzini, which hung over his fireplace for many years... with his life-long pilgrimage for peace, he was so much an apostle as a saint of his profession." "The Death of Felix Moscheles," *The Nation*, 29 December 1917; Kroll, *Ignaz Moscheles and the Changing World of Musical Europe*, 156.

30 Klingemann, *Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdys Briefwechsel mit Legationsrat Karl Klingemann in London* (Essen: G.D. Baedeker, 1909), 18–19.

31 Georg Rosen, Arabischer Spruch aus Hafiz Gasellen, 11 November 1853, copy, ASWPC.

32 Auszug aus dem Trauregister der evangelischen-lutherischen St. Nikolai Kirchengemeinde zu Leipzig, 21 December 1838, ASWPC; Georg Rosen, Königliches Konsulat zu Jerusalem. Vita Personalia des königlichen Konsuls Dr. Rosen. 1852 bis 1860, Gesandtschaft Konstantinopel VI, 281, Rep. 81, GStPK.

for his diplomatic position through her education in English, French and German and that

“ihre auf Reisen in Italien u.s.w. gewonnene Bekanntschaft mit den Sitten südlicher Völker, machen sie ganz besonders zu der Stellung als Gattin eines Beamten im Auslande, der auch den bescheidenen Anforderungen seines Postens obliegenden Repräsentations-Pflichten als unverheirateten Mann kaum je zu genügen im Stande ist, geeignet.”

Georg explained further that “a consulate offering intellectual as well as Biblical refreshment is doubly desirable in Jerusalem” and that Serena would, as the daughter of the famous Ignaz Moscheles, surely know how to contribute to such an environment.³³

Georg and Serena were married at the St. Nikolai Church in Leipzig on the anniversary of Ignaz and Charlotte Moscheles' wedding, and Moscheles put the poem “Verständnis” (understanding) by Probal to music on the occasion.³⁴ With the cholera breaking out in Jerusalem intermittently throughout the nineteenth century and health facilities in the city of Jerusalem at the time not enjoying the best of reputations, Serena Rosen gave birth to a boy in Leipzig on 30 August 1856.³⁵ Ignaz Moscheles celebrated the birth of his grandson by adapting the late-romantic priest Julius Sturm's *Schlummerlied* (lullaby) to music in F (2/4) and G (6/8). The boy was named Friedrich after his paternal grandfather, and soon after his baptism, also at St. Nikolai Church, Serena and little Fritz joined Georg Rosen in Jerusalem.³⁶

33 “her travels in Italy etc. gained acquaintance with the customs of southern peoples, make her specially suitable for the position of wife of an official abroad, who as an unmarried man cannot fulfil the modest requirements of representation that behoves his position.” Georg Rosen to Otto von Manteuffel, 19 December 1853, 20754, Personalakten 12583, PA AA.

34 Kroll, *Ignaz Moscheles and the Changing World of Musical Europe*, 155.

35 Rosen's siblings were also born in Leipzig. Access to superior health care was the main reason for Serena and her children to return to Saxony frequently. Serena Rosen to Sophie Klingemann, 26 October 1862, Nr. 55, D 72 Rosen-Klingemann, LAV NRW OWL.

36 Jeanne Rosen, Serena Moschles (Rosen)'s Autograph Album, March 1891, HRPC; Abschrift aus dem Taufbuch St. Nikolai zu Leipzig, 30 August 1856, Nr. 912, Bl. 253, Ev.-Luth. Kirchengemeinde St. Nikolai; Henry J. Roche, “Roche-Moscheles Family Tree,” Descendants of Jean Antoine (Antonin) Roche and Emily Mary Moscheles (Mumi), July 1978 HRPC4.

5 A Childhood in Jerusalem's Takiyyah Neighbourhood³⁷

Suleiman, as we have come to know him, would have known little of these important people, who had come before him in lands far away, while he was growing up in Jerusalem, scared of ifrits lurking in dark corners of the city.³⁸ The alleys around the takiyyah and the Prussian consulate, in which Fritz walked and played, were narrow and sporadically arched over, when a house was expanded and its static needed support from an adjacent building. The practice had been common for centuries, as buildings sunk into the ground or collapsed and stones from the ruins were repurposed for new structures. Some arches were higher, others lower, allowing for alternating light and darkness. As Fritz learned from his friends Arif and Ismail, ifrits were skulking in the shadows.³⁹ In daredevil games the frightened children would venture into “a succession of extensive vaults”, that formed the substructure of the Prussian consulate. Equipped with candles they would cross under the 6,400 square meter of the grounds of the house and its terraces, until “we came to a small stone chamber, in the middle of which was a white Muhammedan tomb. We children used to shudder when we entered this place because we knew on good authority that a particularly terrible “ifrit” was guarding this tomb.”⁴⁰

Although Fritz and his younger brothers Hareth (1860–1902) and Felix (1863–1925) shared much of their childhoods with their friends, they were not only separated by virtue of emerging from the labyrinth cellars of “the underworld” into a predominantly German-English household. They grew up in the Prussian consulate. A stately mansion over three levels, the living quarters and administrative offices were interspersed by courtyards with fountains and flower beds. Vines trailed up a stone-staircase and passion flowers grew around

³⁷ The neat separation of Jerusalem into four quarters – the Christian or Latin, the Armenian, the Jewish and the Muslim – is a nineteenth century inventive description by various European visitors. Rather than of four quarters, the city consisted of numerous small neighbourhoods, some named after sites like a Sufi order, a bath or an olive market, others after dominant families, or religious groups. Arnon, “Jerusalem in the Ottoman Period”; Ruth Kark and Michal Oren-Nordheim, *Jerusalem and Its Environs. Quarters, Neighborhoods, Villages. 1800–1948* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2001), 49–72; Pullan, “Transformation of Jerusalem,” 226.

³⁸ A type of infernal jinn in Islamic mythology, an ifrit is “an enormous winged creature of smoke, either male or female, who lives underground and frequents ruins.” “Ifrit. Islamic Mythology,” in *Encyclopædia Britannica* (2016). <http://www.britannica.com/topic/ifrit>.

³⁹ Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 14.

⁴⁰ Acta Betr. des Grundstücks – Contratto, 9 October 1855, II Nr. 773, Ministerium der Auswärtigen Angelegenheiten, GStPK; Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 7–8.

pomegranate and orange trees that were inhabited by chameleons. Overarched by two large cypress trees, three gazelles roamed free in a vast garden of bushes and weeds.⁴¹ A Turkish bath allowed for comfort and cleanliness. Three maids from Leipzig with impeccable Jerusalemite Arabic – with a tinge of a Saxonian accent – took care of kitchen and household. The horses were looked after by Bekir, whom the maids called “Bäcker” (baker), and three kavasses (guards) from good Jerusalem families provided security and appropriate representation. From the terraces and sleeping-chambers of Serena and Georg the Haram al-Sharif and the copulas of the Holy Sepulchre could be seen. Fritz was “Ibn ‘Unsul”, the son of the consul, and “after God the Consuls were the highest persons in Palestine... Woe unto him who did not make room soon enough for the Consul!”⁴²

6 Early Education near Hebron and Dresden

Social standing was no obstacle for close and intimate interactions with the equally elated notable Khalidi family.⁴³ The periodic travels of the Rosen family back to Germany, however, had the Rosen boys know that there was something else that made them different. One of his first visits to Saxony came back to Fritz's memory, when he wrote his curriculum vitae at the age of twenty: “Due to the long presence in the country and the perennial interaction with Arabs, I and my little brother had become entirely similar to the Arabs. The Arabic language had become so convenient and familiar for us, that we had almost forgotten German and English and we had to make an effort to make ourselves under-

⁴¹ Acta Betr. des Grundstücks – Contratto, 9 October 1855, II Nr. 773, Ministerium der Auswärtigen Angelegenheiten, GStPK; Serena Rosen, Unser Garten-Divan, auch Teraße genannt, 1854, Water colour painting with description, PRPC; Felix Rosen, “Botanische Erinnerungen. Bruder Dornbusch,” *Ostdeutscher Naturwart*, August 1925, 402.

⁴² As Eliav points out, the social position of the consul was a reflection of the politics of the city and the capitulations the Ottomans had granted European powers. Consuls stood at the head of their protected communities and took on governmental functions. They judged legal cases and carried out educational, medical and social projects in the city. Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 8–9; Heinrich Brockhaus, *Tagebücher*, 100; Mordechai Eliav, *Britain and the Holy Land, 1838–1914. Selected Documents from the British Consulate in Jerusalem* (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi Press, 1997), 15.

⁴³ In the Ottoman period the Khalidis usually ran the Islamic courts in Jerusalem. They were one of seven notable families that administered the city's affairs in an often contested division of labour with the from Constantinople delegated Ottoman governors. Montefiore, *Jerusalem*, 308; Ben-Basat and Buessow, “Ottoman Jerusalem,” 115–17.



Fig. 1.1. “For grandfather from Fritz and Hareth. Jerusalem, June 1865”. Flowercard sent to Ignaz Moscheles.

stood well by our relatives in Leipzig.”⁴⁴ In Leipzig his father introduced Friedrich to his former professor of Arabic, Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer. The internationally renowned Arabist was captivated by the boy’s prattling in Arabic. On another of these “home” visits, Friedrich was taught how to read and write German at a school in Loschwitz on the Elbe. To his teacher, Herr Haase, and others in the villa town the boy from Jerusalem was quite the attraction. The “Wunderthier” (wondrous beast) was urged to speak about “Jerusalem and the wonders of the Orient”, and young Rosen remembered that to many Loschwitz, Jerusalem was located in Egypt.⁴⁵

Back in Jerusalem, Serena and Georg took on Fritz’s education for the first years. When the city was too hot in the summer, the Rosens and the consulate staff would relocate to the less stifling environment of the Judean hills. One

⁴⁴ Fink, “Kindheit und Jugend Rosen,” 133.

⁴⁵ Georg Rosen to Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer, 11 November 1857, NKS 2969, 4°, KB – HA; Georg Rosen to Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer, 11 May 1859, NKS 2969, 4°, KB – HA; Fink, “Kindheit und Jugend Rosen,” 134.

year they stayed in tents near Nablus, another summer they were hosted by a Greek Orthodox monastery at Mar Elias between Bethlehem and Hebron, putting them up in an adjacent olive tree grove.⁴⁶ Most frequently the Rosens summered in the hills near Hebron, pitching their tent with its Prussian flag under Abraham's Oak. Here, under the "wide branches" of this "hoary evergreen oak (*quercus aegilops*)", Friedrich remembered his first education in Palestine: "My education, when its time came, was limited to my learning and saying by heart a hymn every morning before breakfast. This I did easily, walking up and down between vines with my hymnbook for half an hour." After breakfast he would spend the rest of the day with "Araberjungen" (Arabian-boys), who were looking after the vineyards:

Ihre Kopfbedeckung war eine rothe Mütze mit blauem Quast; sonst waren sie nur noch mit einem Hemd und einem breiten kamelsledernen Gürtel bekleidet, in welchem sie Messer, Schwamm, Feuerstein und mitunter auch eine Pistole trugen. Sie lebten, da es ja zur Sommerzeit in jenen Gegenden nie regnet, meist im Freien und beschäftigten sich damit, den traubenvertilgenden Vögeln Schlingen und Leimruthen zu stellen, wobei ich ihnen gern behilflich war.⁴⁷

Some Arab Palestinians followed crop cycles in the different climatic regions between Mediterranean plain (citrus tree and pomegranate orchards), Judean hills (olives, vineyards, goat and sheep pasture), and semi-desert plains around Jericho and Beersheba (wheat and dates). Following their agricultural work, they were itinerant but not nomadic, also living in settled homes and cultivating village identities. The Rosens' summer camping overlapped with this form of circular migratory agriculture. With his father Friedrich rode out over the hills to a mountain, from where the Mediterranean and the "coast of the Philistines" could be seen at sunset.⁴⁸ From time to time Fritz would read *Robinson Crusoe* and be told the stories of Homer's *Odyssey*. Serena taught him English, mathe-

⁴⁶ Georg Rosen to Sophie Klingemann, 8 October 1862, Nr. 55, D 72 Rosen-Klingemann, LAV NRW OWL.

⁴⁷ Their head-cover was a red cap with a blue tassel; beyond that they were only clothed with a shirt and a camel-leather belt, in which they carried knife, sponge, firestone and occasionally also a pistol. They lived, as it never rains in this region during the summer, mostly in the open and were busy with looping and putting out birdlime for the grape-gulping birds. I very much enjoyed lending them a hand." Fink, "Kindheit und Jugend Rosen," 136; Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 3.

⁴⁸ Fink, "Kindheit und Jugend Rosen," 136; Georg Rosen, "Ueber das Thal und die nächste Umgebung Hebrons," *ZDMG* 12 (1858): 513.

matics and music two hours every morning, and made sure that he would play with the son of an Anglican priest, so he could practice his English.⁴⁹

7 Frau Konsul. Culture and Society in Jerusalem

During the summers Serena took to painting: sceneries of the Prussian camp under Abraham's Oak, views of the city walls of Jerusalem with the road leading to Bethlehem, the 'Aqbat at-Takiyyah outside of the consulate, the courtyard of their estate and Jaffa seen from the beach to its south.⁵⁰ In these early photography times her painting played the role of artistic representation, but also of descriptive documentation to be shown or sent to family and friends in far off Leipzig or London. Her watercolour sketch of the 'Aqbat at-Takiyyah reads on the back:

Unsere Straße genannt Akbet el Tekiyi

In unserer Haushür rechts steht der Cavass Hassan mit seinem Stocke. Das große rothe Erkerfenster gehört zur Kanzlei. Von dem großen Bogen der durch einen Gang in den Bazar führt, steht eine Bauerfrau, ihre Kleidung ist ein blaues Hemd, das Kopftuch ist weiß mit bunten Franzen, auf dem Kopf trägt sie einen Korb mit Milchkrügen oder Gemüse. Rechts neben ihr ist die Treppe unseres Hospiz Hauses. Ihr seht vis-a-vis das Fenster des Hauptzimmers mit einer weißen Kuppel darüber. Das Erkerfenster links gehört zum Effendi-Hause, ein schwarzer Sklav faulenzet nach Landessitte im Fenster. Ich sitze beim Zeichnen unter dem gemauerten Bogengang.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* was well-liked by German children, and as Zantop has shown, created a longing for establishing exotic colonies in their young minds in which the "little savages" were domesticated. It did not have this effect on Rosen. Serena Rosen to Sophie Klingemann, 10 October 1861, Nr. 68, D 72 Rosen-Klingemann, LAV NRW OWL; Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 1–2; Fink, "Kindheit und Jugend Rosen," 136; Susanne Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies. Conquest, Family, and Nation in Precolonial Germany, 1770–1870* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 102–3.

⁵⁰ Serena Rosen, "Unser Garten-Divan, auch Teraße genannt"; Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 2, 6, 36.

⁵¹ "Our street, called Aqbat at-Takiyyah– In our house door on the right stands the kawass Hassan with his stick. The large red bay window belongs to the chancellor. In front of the big arch, which reaches through a passage into the bazaar, stands a farmers woman, her dress is a blue shirt, her headscarf is white with coloured tassels, on her head she carries a basket with milk jars or vegetables. On her right is the staircase of our hospice house. Vis-à-vis you [2nd person plural] see the window of the main room with a white copula above. The bay window on the left belongs to the Effendi-house, a black slave lounges according to the country's customs in the window. As I sketch I sit under the arched-over passage." Serena Rosen, "Unsere Straße genannt Akbet el Tekiyi," ASWPC (Jerusalem, 1854); Serena Rosen, *Unser Garten-Divan, auch Teraße genannt*, 1854, PRPC.



Fig. 1.2. “Our street called Aqbat at-Takiyyah”. Watercolour by Serena Rosen, 1854.

Serena was the socialite and cultural entertainer in Jerusalem that Georg had promised his superiors in Berlin before they married. Good relations with the wife of the Anglo-Prussian Protestant Bishop Samuel Gobat, Maria, were just

as important as socialising with the Khalidi women, and giving a weekly performance of a musical piece, composed specifically for this purpose by her father Ignaz. Her performances on the Apostolic Anglican Church's organ offered some European haute culture to the frontier Brits and Germans.⁵²

Good deeds were another aspect of her role as the consul's wife, and so she donated expendable water from the consulate's eight cisterns to the poor among the Jewish inhabitants of the city.⁵³ Though she knew of her Jewish descent, nothing indicates that Serena connected closely with any of the various Jewish communities living in Jerusalem. In line with Sebag Montefiore's description of the Jewish quarter at the time, Friedrich Rosen remembered it as the poorest and the dirtiest of the city and Georg's sister, Sophie Klingemann, frequently had to read letters complaining about the unhealthy environment that Jerusalem was becoming with the influx of more and more foreigners at the time. This would not have been the most becoming society for the elated Rosens, themselves recurrently suffering from illness.⁵⁴ Too close of an association with the Jewish community would also not have been looked upon favourably by European society, as the Prusso-Anglican bishopric had originally been founded with the aim of converting Jerusalem's Jews to Christianity in an evangelical attempt to accelerate the second coming of the Messiah. At the same time, the Prussian consulate was responsible for the Jerusalem's Yiddish-speaking Ashkenaz Jewish population, and Georg Rosen had on a number of occasions the in his opinion unsavoury pleasure of adjudicating legal cases between the Ashkenazi and Sephardic communities in questions over who had the right to carry out ritual

52 Ignaz wrote to his daughter: "As continuation of my here composed songs I send you... these others. Soon I will send you again an organ preludium, for it pleases me, that you performed the first one in church. Now write me if such a preludium is too short, too long, too solemn or too sweet for the Jerusalem taste... I am thinking that the soprano voice should be found – but tenor! The tenor voice is rare in Europe, but Jerusalem!? Should perhaps the guard of a minaret or one of the pilgrims on the way to Mecca carry a tenor voice with them?" Ignaz Moscheles to Serena Rosen, 20 August 1854, ASWPC; Serena Rosen an Maria Gobat-Zeller, 1856–1874, PA 653a XXXI 1.232, Christian Friedrich Spittler-Archiv, StABS; Heinrich Brockhaus, *Tagebücher*, 101–2.

53 Georg Rosen, Report to AA, 6 December 1852, II Nr. 773, Ministerium der Auswärtigen Angelegenheiten, GStPK; Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 7.

54 The misery of the Jewish quarter led Moses Montefiore to acquire lands outside the city walls and construct almshouses for poor Jewish families: Mishkenot Sha'ananim was completed in 1860. Georg Rosen observed that Montefiore's attempts to motivate the Jewish community of Hebron to become more industrious foundered on their "indolent piety". Georg Rosen to Sophie Klingemann, 9 October 1861, Nr. 68, D 72 Rosen-Klingemann, LAV NRW OWL; Montefiore, *Jerusalem*, 345–52; Abigail Green, *Moses Montefiore. Jewish Liberator, Imperial Hero* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012); Georg Rosen, "Ueber das Thal und die nächste Umgebung Hebrons," 513.

slaughter.⁵⁵ The case of Shimon Rosenthal, a convert from Judaism to Christianity, who then returned to Judaism just to relapse again, all the while causing conflicts inside the Protestant-Anglican Bishopric and between the English Consul James Finn and Georg Rosen, led to a permanent rift between the predominantly British Jewish converts to Protestantism and the growing number of German Protestants under Bishop Samuel Gobat. As Lückhoff points out, the Rosenthal case came at a time when the German community began to emancipate itself from its reliance on British infrastructures and the conflict was more political than religious in nature.⁵⁶

8 From Celestial to Terrestrial. Jerusalem Re-enters World Politics

Friedrich's childhood in the 'Aqbat at-Takiyyah in the middle of the nineteenth century fell into a time of tremendous changes for Jerusalem, Palestine and the Ottoman Empire. Napoleon's occupation of Egypt and unsuccessful march up the eastern Mediterranean shore between 1798 and 1801 had rattled the long-time all-dominant Ottoman Empire and in the aftermath, the Ottoman Albanian Muhammad Ali had established himself as de facto sovereign of Egypt. Recognising the continuing weakness of the Ottomans he in turn invaded the Fertile Crescent. Thus, under pressure from the south and since the mid-eighteenth century from expanding Russia along its northern flank, the Ottoman Empire was becoming dependant on the French and particularly the British for propping up its power and interceding on its behalf diplomatically.⁵⁷ Across the northern hemisphere Christian lands from the American mid-west to Victorian Great Britain, the European continent and the Eurasian empire of Russia were moving into

⁵⁵ Friedrich Rosen believed that his father was played by the Jewish community, because he was a "goy". In Rosen's memory, Laib Aron Levi Hirsch, a leader of the community, once told his father "In small oath, Mr. Consul, perjury is permissible with *goyim*." Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 16.

⁵⁶ Hoffmann, "Erinnerungen an einen preußischen Konsul in Jerusalem," *Neueste Nachrichten aus dem Morgenlande* 36, no. 6 (1 August 1892): 4; Mordechai Eliav, "The Case of Shimon Rosenthal: Apostasy, Return to Judaism and Relapse [in Hebrew]," *Cathedra* 61 (1991): 113–32; Eliav, *Britain and the Holy Land*, 78; Lückhoff, *Anglikaner und Protestanten im Heiligen Land*, 223–25.

⁵⁷ The dominant British naval power supported the Ottoman Empire to serve as a buffer between British interests along the Mediterranean and into the Indian ocean and the expanding Russian Empire. David Abulafia, *The Great Sea. A Human History of the Mediterranean*, 3rd ed. (London: Penguin Books, 2014), 504–23.

mechanised modernity. The resulting upheavals to societies made the primordial appeal of messianic redemption grow. Jerusalem, which had for long existed more as the heavenly than the terrestrial in the northern Christian imagination and had since the Crusades been mostly beyond physical reach, became pre-ordained as the place of the second-coming of Christ. Jews had been singing “next year in Jerusalem” for millenia, hoping to rebuild the Temple that Titus had destroyed in 70 CE. With their cousin Islam the two religions shared the belief that here, in Palestine, the day of days, Armageddon, was to take place. The Muslim population of Jerusalem consisted primarily of different Arab groups that had settled in and around the city in the sixteenth century, but there were also Muslims from India and Central Asia living in the city, descendants of Turkish and Mamluk officials, and the likes of Hajji Bekir from Darfur, who had arrived together with pilgrims from the Maghrib and settled in the Maghraba quarter more recently.⁵⁸

While Messianic doctrines had been by and large hypothetical beliefs for long, the acceleration of seafaring and the pacification of the Mediterranean from piracy had brought the Holy Land closer to Christians and Ashkenazi Jews. This was paralleled by Calvinist and Pietist Christian reappraisals of whether the Messiah had already or was still to come.⁵⁹ The weakness of the Ottoman Empire provided an opening for the European powers, inspired by a sense of Crusader romanticism, to insert themselves back into the Holy Land. As the pastor of the Rosens, Philipp Wolff, wrote in an essay on the German presence in Jerusalem in the mid-nineteenth century: “The peaceful crusade has begun... so that once the spiritual rule over Jerusalem shall fall to us.”⁶⁰ A parallel acceleration of the influx of Ashkenazi Jews to Jerusalem was caused by an earthquake in Safed in 1837, leaving much of the Galilean town destroyed and its Jewish population in search of a new home. At the same time Russian Jews left for the Holy Land and settled in Jerusalem to avoid a mandatory twenty-five year military conscription and constant pressure to convert to Christianity. Emigration from the Habsburg Empire came in reaction to Jewish emancipation and integra-

⁵⁸ Arnon, “Jerusalem in the Ottoman Period,” 14; Dror Ze’evi, *An Ottoman Century. The District of Jerusalem in the 1600s* (Albany: SUNY, 1996), 68–69; Thierry Zarcone, *Sufi Pilgrims from Central Asia and India in Jerusalem* (Kyoto: Center for Islamic Area Studies at Kyoto University, 2009).

⁵⁹ Abulafia, *The Great Sea*, 555–57; Donald M. Lewis, *The Origins of Christian Zionism. Lord Shaftesbury and Evangelical Support for a Jewish Homeland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

⁶⁰ Philipp Wolff, “Zur neueren Geschichte Jerusalems, von 1843–1884,” *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* XXII (1885): 15.

tion, causing isolationists to leave into the Ottoman millet system.⁶¹ A pull factor was that Haluqa (donations) by Jewish philanthropists to the Jewish community in Jerusalem improved living conditions, making the city a more attractive destination for destitute Jewish populations from Eastern Europe.⁶²

In exchange for their military support during the Egyptian-Ottoman wars (1831–3 and 1839–1841) the European powers were allowed to open consulates in Jerusalem, and after Great Britain had opened its representation in 1839, France, Sardinia and the Austrians followed suit.⁶³ Geo-strategically and economically the backwater city of Jerusalem held near to no significance. The predominant task of the consulates was to look after and support the various aligned Christian communities in the city. Unlike the Armenian, Coptic, Ethiopian, Georgian, Greek and Roman Catholic churches, Protestantism had not yet been represented in the array of Jerusalem's Christendom. Imbued with ample Protestant religiosity, the Prussian king Friedrich Wilhelm IV set about changing this by co-creating an Anglo-Prussian bishopric with the Anglican Church, with the express purpose of converting the Jews of the city to Christianity for their salvation – and for many proselytisers in expectation of the coming of the messiah. Prussia opened its consulate in 1843 and sent Gustav Schultz to Jerusalem as first consul. The consulate was to provide the necessary political backing for the German Protestant presence and represent Prussian interests in close alliance with Britain. In the years to follow, the practice of converting Jews in the city proved more difficult than anticipated. Missionary activities were redirected towards Arab Christians of other denominations and like other European powers the Prussian state funded a number of public works in the city.⁶⁴

⁶¹ The millet system of the Ottoman Empire allowed religious communities to adjudicate personal law in confessional courts according to Muslim shari'a, Christian canon law, and Jewish halakha. Arnon, "Jerusalem in the Ottoman Period," 42.

⁶² Shalom Ginat, "The Jewish Settlement in Palestine in the 19th Century," in *The Jewish Settlement in Palestine. 634–1881*, Alex Carmel, Peter Schäfer, and Yossi Ben-Artzi (Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 1990), 168–69.

⁶³ Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid Marsot, *A Short History of Modern Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 61–64; Yaron Perry, "Englisch-preußische Zusammenarbeit im Heiligen Land," 32; Yaron Perry, *British Mission to Jews in Palestine*, 1–2.

⁶⁴ Bishop Gobat even complicated conversions of Jews to Christianity, as Perry has shown. Gustrau's argument that the Prussian consuls were sent to the Levant as part of a "silent penetration" appears as a retroactive interpretation of the mid-century based on late-century travel reports. Yaron Perry, "Englisch-preußische Zusammenarbeit im Heiligen Land," 38; Gustrau, *Orientalen oder Christen?* 17–20, 211; Ben-Basat and Buessow, "Ottoman Jerusalem," 115–16.

9 Consular Chores

These larger forces and developments framed the purview of Georg Rosen's tasks as consul. To solidify Prussia's position in the city and decrease expenses – the liquidity of funds for Jerusalem was a continuous issue – the estate of the consulate, which had heretofore only been rented from Hussein Hubbeh Effendi, was to be purchased.⁶⁵ As the estate had been part of a waqf dhurri (family endowment) of the Hubbeh family, its title would need to be changed before being sold. Considering that foreign ground acquisitions were at the time not allowed in the Ottoman Empire this necessitated acquiring fatawa (legal opinions) from the muftis (jurists) of the different dominant legal schools in Jerusalem. The dragoman of the consulate, Daud el-Kurdi, bore the brunt of the legal and translation work. Together with bargaining over the price the process lasted from 1855–57.⁶⁶

With regards to foreign policy, Rosen was tasked with sending news – “Neuigkeitsberichte” – from Palestine to the head of the Prussian legation in Constantinople and the Prussian minister-presidents in Berlin.⁶⁷ Part of the information sharing network were the also the consul at Beirut, Theodor Weber, and the vice-consuls in Jaffa, Acre and Nablus. The topics of the communiques varied. Sam'an Kawar, the father of the Prussian vice-consul Said Kawar in Nablus, had been murdered. Rumours of Prussian support for the rebels of Abderahman 'Amer in Hebron against Ottoman forces on the occasion of the visit of the Duke of Bra-

⁶⁵ The Prussian interior and finance ministries were hard-pressed to understand the significance of the Jerusalem consulate, which they saw as a pet-project of the Prussian king. Schütz, *Preussen in Jerusalem (1800–1861)*, 173.

⁶⁶ Before the estate was written over to the Prussian state in an Italian language contract, the seller of the estate, Hussein Hubbeh Effendi, acquired legal opinions from Hassan Bushir, the mudir ewqafi Quds ash-Sharif, Mustafa el-Husseini, the Hanafi mufti of Jerusalem, Muhammad Ali el-Husseini, the nazir en-nufus, Musa el-Husseini Muftizade, and Muhammad As'ad, the Shafi'i mufti in Jerusalem. Wolff noted in 1885 that it was actually Muhammad As'ad who purchased the estate on behalf of the Prussian state. The papers in the Prussian archives do not confirm this, but Muhammad As'ad was on Georg Rosen's payroll and received Prussian decorations. *Acta Betr. des Grundstücks – Contratto*, 9 October 1855, II Nr. 773, Ministerium der Auswärtigen Angelegenheiten, GStPK; Wolff, “Geschichte Jerusalems,” 2; Georg Rosen, “Friedrich Wilhelm auf arabisch,” 177; Lückhoff, *Anglikaner und Protestanten im Heiligen Land*, 260; Kark and Oren-Nordheim, *Jerusalem and Its Environs*, 58; Wael Hallaq, *The Origins and Evolution of Islamic Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

⁶⁷ During Georg Rosen's tenure from 1853 to 1867 the Prussian ambassadors in Constantinople were Louis von Wildenbruch, himself a scholar interested in Palestine, and the career diplomats Robert von der Goltz and Joseph Maria Anton Brassier de Saint-Simon-Vallade. The chancellors were Otto von Manteuffel and Otto von Bismarck.

bant to the city in 1855 needed clarification.⁶⁸ And an eye was kept out on a brewing situation of religious tensions between “Jiddan-inspired” Arabs in Gaza and the local Greek-Orthodox community, which the governor of Ottoman Jerusalem Sureya Pasha and the Bishop Kyrilios in Gaza had to resolve. The Greek-Orthodox church stood under the protection of the Russian Empire and any minor local conflict in the Holy Land could spark a European war, as the lead up to the first industrialised war in Crimea in 1853–56 had shown.⁶⁹ In 1859/60 the imperial client-politics of European powers, offering their support and protection to the various religious and ethnic communities to gain influence, erupted into bloody conflict between Christians and Druze in Lebanon. “All eyes on the Lebanon question”, Rosen reported to Constantinople, describing in detail the unfolding dynamics of Christian-Druze skirmishes and massacres.⁷⁰ During the negotiations to resolve the situation with the British, the French and the Ottomans, Rosen was pulled in by the Beirut and Damascus Consuls Weber and Johann Gottfried Wetzstein.⁷¹ Rosen returned to Jerusalem soon enough, assuaging his sister Sophie’s worries over intensifying violence in the region without the presence of French troops or other European interference and noted: “We live here in profound peace.”⁷²

His yearly springtime reports were concerned with pilgrimage numbers from the various Christian nations to Jerusalem. Another topic was which Christian denominations had been fighting among themselves in the church of the Holy Sepulchre, the supposed site of Jesus’ crucifixion, anointment, burial and resurrection.⁷³ Time and again Rosen would send updates on conflicts arising between different Bedouin tribes among themselves or with the Ottoman authorities: in 1856 about Abu Ghorri and his conflicts with the local Ottoman Governor;

68 Ismael Kamil Pacha to Georg Rosen, 15 November 1855, *Gesandtschaft Konstantinopel VI*, 282, Rep. 81, GStPK.

69 Louis von Wildenbruch to Otto von Manteuffel, 13 August 1858, *Gesandtschaft Konstantinopel VI*, 282, Rep. 81, GStPK. Georgios Tsourous, “Between the Nations: The Sepulchre in Intercommunal and International Dynamics,” in *Routledge Handbook on Jerusalem*, Suleiman A. Mourad, Naomi Koltun-Fromm, and Bedross Der Matossian (London: Routledge, 2019), 379–81.

70 Georg Rosen to Robert von der Goltz, 20 June 1859, *Gesandtschaft Konstantinopel VI*, 282, Rep. 81, GStPK; Georg Rosen to Robert von der Goltz, 29 November 1860, *Gesandtschaft Konstantinopel VI*, 282, Rep. 81, GStPK.

71 Georg Rosen to Theodor Weber, 29 September 1859, *Gesandtschaft Konstantinopel VI*, 269, Rep. 81, GStPK; Huhn, *Johann Gottfried Wetzstein*.

72 Georg Rosen to Sophie Klingemann, 5 July 1861, Nr. 68, D 72 Rosen-Klingemann, LAV NRW OWL.

73 Georg Rosen to Louis von Wildenbruch, 11 April 1858, *Gesandtschaft Konstantinopel VI*, 282, Rep. 81, GStPK.

between the Laham and Abu Ghosh tribes in 1858 over control of the Bani Hasan area; and in 1866 on the Jehalin under Abu Dohuk.⁷⁴ Rosen was well aware of the disruptive nature of land, tax and administrative reforms carried out first by the Egyptians and then by the Ottomans in Palestine. He did not, however, report on these events in the context of Tanzimat (modernisation reforms) causing conflicts between land notables, nomads and state authorities, but as highway robbery along the pilgrimage routes criss-crossing the Holy Land.⁷⁵ Which clan did or did not provide for safe passage was an information-service the consulate provided to its travelling subjects.

Rosen was also tasked with accompanying the Prince of Wales, Albert Edward, later King Edward VII, on an excursion to see the grave of Abraham in Hebron in 1862.⁷⁶ Albert Edward had been the first Christian to be granted access to the site of the patriarch by the Ottomans. Several years later the Duke of Brabant had been the first Christian to be allowed entrance to the Haram ash-Sharif, the Holy Sanctuary, from where, according to scripture, Muhammad flew to heaven, and where the Jewish Temples had stood. The crown prince, like his Belgian cousin before him on grand tour, did not leave a particularly interested impression with the Prussian consul.

⁷⁴ Georg Rosen to Louis von Wildenbruch, 15 March 1858, *Gesandtschaft Konstantinopel VI*, 282, Rep. 81, GStPK; Georg Rosen to Joseph Brassier de St. Simon, 24 October 1866, *Gesandtschaft Konstantinopel VI*, 284, Rep. 81, GStPK.

⁷⁵ Georg Rosen, *Geschichte der Türkei von dem Siege der Reform im Jahre 1826 bis zum Pariser Tractat vom Jahre 1856. Von der Vertilgung der Janitscharen bis zum Tode Mahmuds II.* (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1866), 215–17; Georg Rosen, *Geschichte der Türkei von dem Siege der Reform im Jahre 1826 bis zum Pariser Tractat vom Jahre 1856. Von der Thronbesteigung Abdulmedjids bis zum Pariser Tractat von 1856* (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1867), 31, 249; ‘Adel Manna’, “Continuity and Change in the Socio-Political Elite in Palestine During the Late Ottoman Period,” in *The Syrian Land in the 18th and 19th Century*, Thomas Philipp (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1992), 78–81; ‘Adel Manna’, “Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Rebellions in Palestine,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 24, no. 1 (Autumn 1994): 61; Albert Hourani, “Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables,” in *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East. The Nineteenth Century*, William R. Polk and Richard L. Chambers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 41–68.

⁷⁶ “Der Besuch des Prinzen von Wales in Hebron,” *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 26 April 1862, 1045; Goren, “Zieht hin und erforscht das Land”, 205.

10 A Scholar-consul in Jerusalem

Georg Rosen, however, used the opportunity to write down and publish his observations of Abraham's grave site.⁷⁷ The consular workload was still rather light and he was in fact continuously occupied with conducting studies of varying types. Another Biblical site that caught Rosen's attention was the Temple Mount. With Conrad Schick as sketching artist, Rosen produced a study, *Das Haram von Jerusalem und der Tempelplatz des Moria*, which provoked controversy in European scholarly circles.⁷⁸ Based on German diplomatic sources in Constantinople and the archives of the Auswärtiges Amt in Berlin and building on his own experiences in the Ottoman Empire, in 1856 he finished his two volume history of Turkey from the beginning of the Tanzimat reforms in 1826 to the Paris Tractat.⁷⁹ During the fourteen years the Rosens spent in Jerusalem, the consul wrote articles about leprosy to explain why a German Johanniter-hospital was inaugurated in Jerusalem, about a storm caused by meteorite dust (sending samples of the meteorite dust to Berlin for examination), about repairs of the

⁷⁷ Georg Rosen, "Die Patriarchengruft zu Hebron, deren Besuch durch den Prinzen von Wales und ihre Bedeutung für die biblische Archaeologie," *Zeitschrift für allgemeine Erdkunde. Neue Folge* XIV (1863): 369–429.

⁷⁸ Georg Rosen's study came in response to an international dispute among European Palestine scholars that went on for twenty years. The English architecture historian James Fergusson had argued that the Dome of the Rock was based on a church of fourth century Constantine. The cave underneath was supposedly the grave of Jesus – thus the real Holy Sepulchre. Fergusson's argument was contradicted by George Williams, who dreamt of unifying the Anglican and Russian-Orthodox churches, and defended the former identification of the place of the grave on political-religious grounds. Fergusson reiterated his opinion after he visited Jerusalem for the first time in 1864. His opinion was supported by Friedrich Wilhelm Unger, a Byzantinist of Göttingen. But others disagreed, such as Tobler, Wolff, Sepp and Adler. Rosen described in detail the Haram, compared it with descriptions of the Herodian Temple by Yosef ben Matiyahu aka Flavius Josephus (circa 37–100 CE) and then discarded the possibility of Jesus' grave being there. Rosen had Schick sketch out the underground sermon-room of al-Burak and the cisterns. In the 1860s also the French scholars Melchior de Vogüé and Felicien de Saulcy, as well as Schick again, and Charles Warren and Charles Wilson, both British, studied the area, all rejecting Fergusson's assertions, following an argument close to that of Rosen. See Goren for a detailed discussion. Georg Rosen, "Das palästinensische Felsengrab und seine Bedeutung für die formelle Ausbildung der christlichen Kirche," *Zeitschrift für allgemeine Erdkunde. Neue Folge* XVII (1863): 161–201; Georg Rosen, *Das Haram von Jerusalem und der Tempelplatz des Moria: Eine Untersuchung über die Identität beider Stätten* (Gotha: Besser, 1866); Goren, "Zieht hin und erforscht das Land", 206–8.

⁷⁹ Georg Rosen to Sophie Klingemann, 30 November 1862, Nr. 55, D 72 Rosen-Klingemann, LAV NRW OWL; Georg Rosen, *Vertilgung der Janitscharen bis zum Tode Machmuds II.*; Georg Rosen, *Thronbesteigung Abdulmedjids bis zum Pariser Tractat*.

dome above the rotunda of the Holy Sepulchre in the 1860s, a history of Syria and Lebanon in the context of recent upheavals, translations of Arabic poetry, and a number of other topographical, linguistic, ethnographic and literary essays and books.⁸⁰

Rosen became a well-known authority on Palestine in Europe, the *Times* and the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* describing him as a “famous Palestine expert” on the occasion of the visit of the Prince of Wales to Hebron.⁸¹ Carl Hoffman, pastor of the Protestant community in Jerusalem, described Rosen’s chancellery in the garden of the consulate as follows: “Equipped with many books of the most diverse Oriental languages, his office reminded one more of the work place of a savant than of the bureau of an official of the Auswärtiges Amt.” The large library Rosen maintained for his research and for others to consult, became a scholarly centre in Jerusalem.⁸² The eminent Oxford Sanskritist and at the time Bodleian librarian Max Müller, a friend from student days in Leipzig, wrote to him for advice, asking if a Samaritan manuscript collection he had been offered was really worth £500 – Rosen was after all “the best authority in these things”.⁸³ His former professor Fleischer in Leipzig consulted with him on a regular basis and had some of Rosen’s letters published in the *Zeits-*

80 Georg Rosen, “Proben neuerer gelehrter Dichtkunst der Araber,” *ZDMG* 22 (1868): 541–44; Georg Rosen, “Proben neuerer gelehrter Dichtkunst der Araber,” *ZDMG* 20 (1866): 589–95; Georg Rosen, “Zur Geographie Palästina’s,” *Zeitschrift für allgemeine Erdkunde. Neue Folge* XVII (1865): 213–48; Georg Rosen, “Guarmani’s Reise nach dem Négd. Ein Beitrag zur geographischen Kenntniss Arabiens,” *Zeitschrift für allgemeine Erdkunde. Neue Folge* XVIII (1865): 201–18; Georg Rosen, “Das Hospiz des Johanniter-Ordens zu Jerusalem,” *Wochenblatt des Johanniter-Ordens Balley Brandenburg* 10 (30 March 1864): 1; Georg Rosen, *Syrien, das Land und seine Bewohner: mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der neuesten Geschichte und der jüngsten Entwicklung im Libanon* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1864); Georg Rosen, “Urkundensammlung der heiligen Grabeskirche in Jerusalem,” *Das Ausland. Eine Wochenschrift für Kunde des geistigen und sittlichen Lebens der Völker* 37, no. 4 (1864): 95–96; Georg Rosen, “Proben neuerer gelehrter Dichtkunst der Araber,” *ZDMG* 14 (1860): 692–705; Georg Rosen, “Ueber Nâblus und Umgebung,” *ZDMG* 14 (1860): 634–39; Georg Rosen, “Topographisches aus Jerusalem,” *ZDMG* 14 (1860): 604–21; Georg Rosen, “Über neueste Orkane mit Passatstaub in Jerusalem und Aegypten,” *Monatsbericht der Königlich-Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin*, March 1860, 148–51; Georg Rosen, “Die Tenne des Arawna zu Jerusalem,” *Wochenblatt des Johanniter-Ordens Balley Brandenburg* 12 (19 December 1860): 53–56; Georg Rosen, “Proben neuerer gelehrter Dichtkunst der Araber,” *ZDMG* 13 (1859): 249–55; Georg Rosen, “Ueber das Thal und die nächste Umgebung Hebrons”; Georg Rosen, “Ueber die Lage des alten Debîr im Stamme Juda,” *ZDMG* 11 (1857): 50–64; Georg Rosen, “Eine Kâsside von ‘Izzet Molla,” *ZDMG* 11 (1857): 312–16.

81 “Der Besuch des Prinzen von Wales in Hebron.”

82 Hoffmann, “Erinnerungen an einen preußischen Konsul in Jerusalem,” 2; Goren, “*Zieht hin und erforscht das Land*”, 201.

83 Max Müller to Georg Rosen, 19 March 1866, ASWPC.

chrift der Morgenländischen Gesellschaft.⁸⁴ In his function as scholar-consul Rosen also acted as local guide to European scholars travelling on the dime of their governments. The German Orientalist Otto Blau needed help with inspecting Samaritan inscriptions at Nablus in 1859, the historian and librarian Georg Heinrich Pertz travelled to Jerusalem in search of manuscripts to add to the holdings of the Royal Library of Berlin in 1862, and the French diplomat-archaeologist Melchior de Vogüé sent his colleague Victor Guérin to Rosen. Also the Dutch cartographer C.W.M van de Velde supplemented his map-making of Judea and the Galilee with the consul's "geographic contributions".⁸⁵ In want of a university in Jerusalem, good relations with incoming scholars and resident Europeans provided Rosen with sources and impetus for his scholarly activities that also tied him back into the European sphere of letters.

The Rosens enjoyed these intellectual interactions. They were one of the main reasons why they liked their extended stay in Jerusalem.⁸⁶ Among the European visitors, the Rosens entertained, was also the German publisher Heinrich Brockhaus, who toured Egypt and Syria in 1858. Rosen and Brockhaus spent an evening with Sheikh Muhammad Asad, the Shafi'i mufti and imam of the Aqsa-mosque. Muhammad composed a qassida (lyrical poem) on the occasion, praising the city of knowledge Leipzig from which Brockhaus had arrived, and Brockhaus as the city's superb representative.⁸⁷ Rosen's relations with Sheikh Muhammad Asad and Hasan Selim ed-Dajani, mufti of the Hanafi school, were another part of society that made life in Jerusalem liveable. They were also essential in a number of Rosen's scholarly works on Arabic poetry, and in guiding him through the Aqsa Mosque. In their company Rosen also witnessed the visit of the Hanafi mufti of Baghdad to Jerusalem on his way back from

⁸⁴ Georg Rosen, "Aus einem Briefe des Consul Dr. Rosen an Prof. Fleischers," *ZDMG* 12 (1858): 340–43.

⁸⁵ See Kirchberger for the mirror circle of the Jerusalem scientific hub in London between Christian von Bunsen and Max Müller and how these two circles interacted. Robert von der Goltz, Bericht, 16 August 1859, Gesandtschaft Konstantinopel VI, 282, Rep. 81, GStPK; Albrecht von Bernstorff to Georg Rosen, 14 January 1862, Königliches Konsulat zu Jerusalem. Gesandtschaft Konstantinopel VI, 283, Rep. 81, GStPK; Charles-Jean-Melchior de Vogüé to Georg Rosen, 6 March 1863, ASWPC; Kirchberger, *Aspekte deutsch-britischer Expansion*, 398; Faehndrich, "Map of the Holy Land," 88.

⁸⁶ Georg Rosen to Sophie Klingemann, 8 October 1862, Nr. 55, D 72 Rosen-Klingemann, LAV NRW OWL.

⁸⁷ Asad, Muhammad, Kasside des Scheichs Muhammed Ass'ad, Mufti zu Jerusalem und Imam der Aksa-Moschee, verfasst anlässlich eines Besuchs des Verlegers Heinrich Brockhaus bei Georg Rosen in Jerusalem, 1858, 45, D 72 Rosen-Klingemann, LAV NRW OWL; Heinrich Brockhaus, *Tagebücher*, 109–11; Wolff, "Geschichte Jerusalems," 2.

Mecca and the poetic language in which legal difficulties of inheritance were discussed between the esteemed jurists. As Rosen noted in passing, the leaders of the two legal schools, who had been friends since student days at al-Azhar university in Cairo, educated the consul in society and politics of the city and the scholarly world they lived in.⁸⁸

The position of consul, as acted out by Georg Rosen, took on a dynamics of itself in connection with the larger forces at play between Jerusalem and the world. The politico-religious dimension of the consulate had not abated but transformed from the time of his predecessor Schultz. Rosen was posted to Jerusalem based on his reputation as a scholar and connoisseur of the region. With irritation the Protestant Brockhaus had observed the ostentatious public religiosity of the city, which he contrasted with: “Bei Rosen waren auch einigemal kleine Gesellschaften, aber ohne Gebet. Man befindet sich mit Rosen, einem gescheiten, liebenswürdigen und bei all ihm eigenen Sarkasmus wohlwollenden und gutherzigen Manne”.⁸⁹

Nevertheless, over his long tenure in Jerusalem Rosen was the representative and mediator of the various strands of the Prussian community such as Evangelicals, the Anglican-Protestant Bishopric, religious-philanthropic institutions, pilgrims and Central European Jewry. He was also the low-level reporter to the embassy in Constantinople and the ministry in Berlin and the reliable go-to man of scholars sent by his government. In his fourteen years Rosen cultivated relationships with individuals from the different communities in Jerusalem, making him familiar with their languages, customs, traditions and histories. Much like in the Caucasus and Constantinople before, his practical experiences informed his scholarly work, infusing his scholarly work with a mix of contemporary, ancient, Biblical, geographic, ethnographic, philological and literary themes. Underlying was often an attempt at preservation of what he saw bound to disappear amid Ottoman modernisation, such as the learned, contemporary Arabic poetry of his notable acquaintances. The width of Georg’s knowledge had been known among Orientalists in Europe before and through his continuous publications he became an authority in all things Jerusalem. Or as Goren noted: “Simply the fact that a consul acting scholar resided in the city, was for many researchers reason to come to Jerusalem.”⁹⁰ This meant conversely, as Reiswitz noted,

⁸⁸ Georg Rosen, “Topographisches aus Jerusalem,” 618; Georg Rosen, “Proben neuerer gelehrter Dichtkunst der Araber”; Georg Rosen, “Proben neuerer gelehrter Dichtkunst der Araber.”

⁸⁹ “At Rosen’s there were also parties a few times, but without prayer. With Rosen one is with a prudent, amiable and despite all his sarcasm benevolent and good-hearted man.” Heinrich Brockhaus, *Tagebücher*, 101–2.

⁹⁰ Goren, “*Zieht Hin und Erforscht das Land*”, 209.

that the consul-scholar was primarily a “reliable seismograph” for German foreign affairs who “felt no outsized inclination to push big politics” and was with his appraising erudition often rather helpless in reacting to political intrigues and power struggles.⁹¹

11 Bible on Horseback, Philosophy in Abraham's Vineyard

Fritz did not take too much notice of these scholarly endeavours of his father at the time. But they shaped some of his thought coordinates in years to come. Friedrich's younger brother Felix, who became later a professor of botany at Breslau university, remembered shortly before his death that at a very young age his father had taught him about the species *lycium*, more commonly known as box-thorn. Georg explained that the flowering shrub was known as “brother box-thorn” in Turkish, because it “would hold on to you and not let you go” like a brother.⁹² Parallel to such linguistic-phytological instruction, father Rosen taught Bible on horseback, as Fritz recalled: “When he rode with me across the ridge of the Mount of Olives, he would show me the place of the city, inaccessible to the Christians, where erstwhile the Temple of Salomon had stood, where now the proud copula of the Mosque of Omar arches.” Father Rosen would point to the south and the Herodion near Bethlehem, followed by the east and the red mountains of Moab. “Then he told me how at the foot of these mountains once a rich, fertile plane had stretched out; how four mighty cities had arisen, and how then God, to punish the inhabitants for their sinfulness, had turned the land into sand desert, from the skies destroyed the cities with fire and sulfur and over all of it poured down this blue salt lake.”⁹³ This geo-religious education, reflective of a broader scholarly interest in the geography of the Bible, impressed anachronistic comparisons on Friedrich Rosen's memories.⁹⁴ On the occasion of a visit to the Sheikh of Abu Dis, he noted later that “the reception of the visitors, the words used, and the customs observed were so like the description of similar events in the Bible that it gave the impression that, as far as the rural population was concerned, nothing had changed in Palestine for the last two or three thousand years.” This Biblical

⁹¹ Reiszvitz, *Belgrad – Berlin*, 100.

⁹² Felix Rosen, “Bruder Dornbusch,” 400.

⁹³ Fink, “Kindheit und Jugend Rosen,” 134.

⁹⁴ John Kitto's 1853 school book uses a similar geo-theological approach without periodisation. John Kitto, *The History of Palestine from the Patriarchal Age to the Present Time; with Introductory Chapters on the Geography and Natural History of the Country and on the Customs and Institutions of the Hebrews* (Edinburgh: Adam & Charles Black, 1853); Goren, *Dead Sea Level*, XVIII–XIX.

"field" education that let Fritz experience "the stories of the Bible as a concrete reality" was not matched with religious fervour, but was rather part and parcel of a reading of the Holy Land through its rocky layers of history from Old Testament through Greco-Roman times to Ottoman present.⁹⁵

The Rosens routinely attended Sunday mass, but only as one of the only social events they found in the city.⁹⁶ Fritz himself was "repelled by the frequent violent fighting between adherents of the different creeds, which often ended in bloodshed. I remember that sometimes, when we returned home from church, the kavass who accompanied us would take a round-about way to avoid the precincts of the Holy Sepulchre, where firing was going on."⁹⁷ Instead, in the tradition of Ballhorn-Rosen reading Milton and Dante with his children, Fritz was educated on the more inquisitive Erasmus of Rotterdam, reading his *Colloquies* in Latin.⁹⁸ German grammar and Prussian history were complemented by learning of the second Schleswig war between the Germans and the Danes in 1864 and the politics of Otto von Bismarck. The prospect of a united Germany coming to fruition excited the boy, but the wars of unification also drew a new line of separation between the north-Germans and the Austrians in Jerusalem. Father Rosen's view of Bismarck was critical, which was in no small part because the chancellor's neglect of Orient policy also retarded the career advancement of the Jerusalem consul.⁹⁹ As a complementary source for learning about German politics father and son would read the satirical *Kladderadatsch*.¹⁰⁰

In later years in Jerusalem Georg Rosen hired a house teacher from Germany to prepare the boys Fritz and Hareth for schooling back in Germany. The theologian from Mecklenburg did not learn any Arabic, introduced caning, which the

⁹⁵ Friedrich Rosen, 1926, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte I*, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 12; Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 28.

⁹⁶ Particularly the absence of dancing they found dulling. In 1860 the Rosens opened a Kaffee-gesellschaft (coffee society) outside the city walls at Karm esh-Sheikh (today Rockefeller) to pass the time. Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 23; Wolff, "Geschichte Jerusalems," 13.

⁹⁷ Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 22–23.

⁹⁸ Fritz Rosen, *Lateinische Dialoge aus Erasmus, mit Korrekturen und Anmerkungen von Vater Georg Rosen*, 1865/6, Nr. 6, D 72 Rosen-Klingemann, LAV NRW OWL.

⁹⁹ Over the fourteen years Georg Rosen spent in Jerusalem he felt increasingly stuck. A chair at a university in Germany would have been paid less than his consul's salary in Jerusalem, he wrote to his sister, and a different consul position would force him to make money on the side as a merchant. A move from consul to a higher position in diplomacy did not seem possible. Georg Rosen to Otto von Bismarck, 4 November 1862, I 2030, Personalakten 12583, PA AA; Georg Rosen to Sophie Klingemann, 30 November 1862, Nr. 55, D 72 Rosen-Klingemann, LAV NRW OWL; Georg Rosen, *Vertilgung der Janitscharen bis zum Tode Machmuds II.*, vi.

¹⁰⁰ Friedrich Rosen, 1926, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte I*, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 20.

boys thought to be “unnecessary”, and treated his pupils with “ill-temper and ruthlessness... and put on a demeanour of high expectations, and he who lives in the Orient may not have any expectations.” The new teacher also brought to an end the summer excursions to the countryside, as he could not miss the amenities of the city, and all this summer-camping took away too much time from education. One spring day Father Rosen had instructed the house teacher to take Fritz down to Jericho and the Dead Sea, which had been a dream of little Fritz. The theologian – Rosen never gave him a name –, apparently unaware of the rising heat when descending on the Dead Sea, rode out with Friedrich in the late morning hours, reaching sea level around noon. The boy, not fed by his teacher, suffered a heat stroke at the spring of Jericho and could not proceed with the teacher and the rest of the caravan down to the Dead Sea, but was nursed by a Bedouin tribe nearby.¹⁰¹ The Bedouins arrived on “fine steeds” at the campsite, performing a raqs al-saif (sword dance) amid the light of a large campfire at night. Rosen described his teacher, in contrast, as “die ganze Öde spießbürgerlichen Phillistertums und trüber Pedanterie”.¹⁰² His first organised German education off to a bumpy start, Georg Rosen had also seen to it that his son learned Arabic beyond what he picked up in the vineyards off Hebron and the Takiyyah neighbourhood. At first, Georg himself instructed Friedrich in Arabic calligraphy. Then he hired an Arab teacher: “Letzteres Fach gewährte mir besonders viel Vergnügen. Ich mußte mit einem breiten Rohrfeder auf einer Tafel von blankem Blech schreiben, und mein Lehrer lobte mich stets, wenn ich die Buchstaben möglichst dick aufschmierte, denn darin besteht bei den Arabern die Kalligraphie.”¹⁰³

12 Leaving Home

Friedrich grew up in Jerusalem until the age of eleven, when his father, suffering repeatedly from health issues that could not be treated adequately in Jerusalem, received notice that he was to be posted as general consul to Belgrade. While Ser-

101 Fink, “Kindheit und Jugend Rosen,” 138–39.

102 “The complete bleakness of bourgeois philistinism and dismal pedanticism”. Friedrich Rosen, 1926, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte I*, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 20; Fink, “Kindheit und Jugend Rosen,” 139.

103 “This last subject granted me particular pleasure. I was tasked to write with a broad reed pen on a metal board, and my teacher always praised me, when I smeared the letters thickly, because thereof consists calligraphy among the Arabs.” There is no mention of the teacher’s name in Rosen’s papers. It is not clear if Arabic class would only have consisted of the beautiful “smearing” of Arabic words, or what texts they read. Fink, “Kindheit und Jugend Rosen,” 137.

ena and Georg were glad to move closer to home, family and more regular access to state of the art health facilities, the Rosen boys had hardly known a different life than that of their garden paradise, the alleys between the Haram al-Sharif and the Holy Sepulchre, and excursions on donkey into to the Judean hills, Hebron and monasteries of befriended priests. As they packed up and left, their pets, playmates and friends stayed behind. It was goodbye for Suleiman. Crossing the Mediterranean Sea to an uncertain future, his recollections of departing from Jaffa mirror his sense of emigration:

Bald sahen wir den Palmenstrand von Joppe immer mehr verschwinden, die Küste jenes Landes, in dem wir so lange gelebt, dessen Sprache wir mit Vorliebe sprachen, in dem so viele unserer schönsten Erinnerungen lagen. Als die letzten Palmen hinter dem bewegten Horizont versunken waren, bemächtigte sich unser Aller ein banges schwermüthiges Schweigen, welches so bald keiner zu unterbrechen wagte.¹⁰⁴

13 Upbringing and Social Capital

Elements of this childhood between Jerusalem and Saxony surfaced throughout Friedrich Rosen's further life. In many ways his subsequent studies and scholarship of Persian, Sanskrit, Hindustani and Turkish language, culture and history, and his diplomatic career from imperial dragoman in peripheral Persia to foreign minister in the Weimar Republic, were continuations of his father's life as a scholar-consul. So was his entertaining relationships with people he encountered on horseback in the desert, in grand halls and salons, at countryside religious festivals, on hikes through forests and mountains, in ministerial hallways and in letters between Calcutta, Tehran, Addis Ababa, Tangier, Berlin and Detmold. In an age of heightening German imperial desires, the scholarly topics his father and uncle had pioneered as well as the guiding themes of his parents' life reappeared in Rosen's dispositions, opinions and *façon de vie* between Orient scholarship and international politics. Albeit, in a different blend.

More so than his father, Friedrich targeted his academic energies in two directions: criticism of the impact of western politics, culture and technology on what he saw as the "ursprüngliche" – the original and authentic – Orient, and spreading knowledge and understanding about the cultures of the East as

104 "Soon we saw the palm beach of Jaffa disappear ever more, the coast of this land in which we had lived for so long, whose language we spoke with affection, in which so many of our fondest memories lay. When the last palms had sunk behind the moving horizon, an uneasy glum silence came over us, which no one dared to break for long." Fink, "Kindheit und Jugend Rosen," 144.



Fig. 1.3. Friedrich Rosen in Bonn, 1871.

he had come to know and value them among German and English audiences. In the words Alam and Subrahmanyam use to describe the Indo-Persian literati in pre-British southern Asia, Friedrich Rosen “was defined through an education, a set of proper references, received notions of honour, proper conduct and behaviour, and the capacity to respond to given situations (including hardship)”.¹⁰⁵ This shaping of character during the first eleven years of his life changed drastically upon his “return” to Germany. Friedrich came to define himself as an outsider in a society, delimited by unfamiliar codes and lacking the familiar Jerusalemite ways. While in boarding school in Thuringia and living with family friends in Bonn and Detmold, Friedrich felt alone. Neither understood nor understanding, he found solace in the memories of colours, smells and pathways of his Jerusalem childhood. His continuing self-study of Arabic was a result of this notion

¹⁰⁵ Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Travels*, 361.

of being “out of place”.¹⁰⁶ In later years he took up Persian with his father, setting him on track for a future in philology studies and on a circuitous path to the diplomatic corps and back to the Orient that he longed for.

The Rosens were never the nobility they could have been, had Ballhorn-Rosen accepted Fürstin Pauline’s offer to raise the family to peerage.¹⁰⁷ But Friedrich Rosen had absorbed the ways of his parents’ milieu: sensibility for the arts, scholarly inquisitiveness and stately demeanour in European and Ottoman-Arab contexts. This early acquired social capital helped him later in gaining access and influence in the diplomatic hubs of Beirut, Tehran, Baghdad, Jerusalem, Berlin, The Hague and London, and in the learned circles of Leipzig, Calcutta, Tehran, Copenhagen and Cambridge. This confluence of continuous cognitive and emotional framings in successive stages and places of his life demarcated and propelled Rosen – from Friedrich to Suleiman to Friedrich and back.

14 A German Adolescence

Until the 1970s it was practice in Germany to write a narrative curriculum vitae of one’s life in order to graduate from high school. In 1876, when Friedrich Rosen was twenty years old and about to finish his Abitur (diploma) at the Leopoldinum Gymnasium at Detmold, the small city was still in the thralls of the great celebrations that accompanied the inauguration of the Hermannsdenkmal a year earlier.¹⁰⁸ Symbolising in Confino’s words an “alleged timeless German character” the twenty-six meter tall statue of Hermann the Cheruskian (circa 18 BCE–21 CE) had been erected three-quarters of an hour hike from the city centre into the Teutoburger Forest.¹⁰⁹ The construction had taken nearly forty years and was only given the final push to completion with the political and financial capital derived from the nationalist fervour that had gripped German lands after victory in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870/71 and the coronation of the Prussian king, Wilhelm I, as German emperor in the hall of mirrors of Versailles. The inauguration of the battle-ready Hermann pointing his sword into the sky and fac-

106 Edward W. Said, *Out of Place: A Memoir* (New York: Vintage, 1999); Fink, “Kindheit und Jugend Rosen,” 137.

107 Klingemann, *Mendelssohn-Bartholdys Briefwechsel mit Klingemann*, 8.

108 Detmold was the residence city of the state of Lippe (1123–1919). It lies east of Bielefeld and west of the river Weser.

109 Alon Confino, *The Nation as a Local Metaphor. Württemberg, Imperial Germany, and National Memory, 1871–1918* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 154; Roswitha Kaiser, “Hermann: Denkmal, Pflege und Inszenierung,” *Denkmalpflege in Westfalen-Lippe* 1 (2007): 13–18.

ing south-east in the direction of the enemy in Gaul drew over 20,000 people to Lippe. Detmold, at the time home to some 8,000 inhabitants, witnessed a “glittering all-German festivity, elevated by the presence of many high guests, at the peak Kaiser Wilhelm himself”.¹¹⁰

In his curriculum vitae Friedrich Rosen made no notice of the occasion. Instead, he narrated over fifteen pages his childhood in Jerusalem and Palestine. Next to the black Egyptian donkey he received from his father, Friedrich's memories carried him to summers spent in tents under the Abraham's Oak outside Hebron, horseback rides with his father, and his study of the Arabic language in Jerusalem and in Germany afterwards.¹¹¹ He described a nearly typical German education of the day through his father and the despised house teacher from Mecklenburg.¹¹² But the emotive qualities of young Rosen's account of his upbringing in the Holy Land and his thick description of colours, temperatures, smells, spells of sicknesses, youthful adventures and parental care showed that home was elsewhere. He was repelled by the obligation to “duzen” his teachers mixed with elaborately brutal beatings at the supposedly progressive Schnepfenthal boarding school in Thuringia that he first attended after leaving Jerusalem. His short accounts of schooling at a Gymnasium in Bonn and at the Leopoldinum Gymnasium in Detmold were dull, dominated by his struggles to catch up with his classmates and his attempt to demonstrate to his teachers that he was worthy of receiving his Abitur. At the time, Rosen could not say what vocation he would pursue, indicating on different official school papers his wish to become an architect or study medicine.¹¹³

Friedrich was awarded his Abitur, qualifying him for university. But emotionally he was stuck in a past already eight years ago, reanimated through day-dreaming of his neighbourhood in Jerusalem, and finding expression in practicing Arabic calligraphy.¹¹⁴ After Georg retired from the consular service in Belgrade in 1875 and subsequently settled in Detmold, father and son continued

110 Friedrich Richter, “Ausgewählte Kapitel aus Detmolds Vergangenheit seit 1700,” in *Geschichte der Stadt Detmold*, Naturwissenschaftlicher und historischer Verein für das Land Lippe (Detmold: Maximilian-Verlag, 1953), 342; Ulrich von Motz, *Das Hermannsdenkmal im Teutoburger Wald. Seine Geschichte und die seines Erbauers* (Detmold: Ernst Schnelle, 1964); Stephan Berke, Frank Huisman, and Michael Zelle, *Das Hermannsdenkmal. Daten, Fakten, Hintergründe*, 2 (Marsberg: Scriptorium Historisch-Archäologische Publikationen und Dienstleistungen, 2008), 61.

111 Fink, “Kindheit und Jugend Rosen,” 132.

112 The Prussian high school regulations of 1837 stipulated a heavy emphasis on Latin and Greek. German, history, geography, mathematics, sciences and French were taught for only a few hours. More heed was paid to German and German history from the 1880s. Wokoeck, *German Orientalism*, 49–50.

113 Fink, “Kindheit und Jugend Rosen,” 150.

114 Friedrich Rosen, 1926, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte I*, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 28–29.

their studies together, even as Georg complained to his sister that his sons were lazy and Friedrich himself recognised that he was prone to “grübeln” (brooding). He picked up his studies in due time and started learning the language that should become his life-long love: Persian.¹¹⁵ Changing residences, variegated memories, and a longing for places exotic and unreal to those he encountered in Germany, together with a strong “Orientalist” disposition in the Rosen family, it came as no surprise when Friedrich Rosen decided to follow in the footsteps of his father and uncle and his university studies in the Oriental language of choice at the time: Sanskrit.

15 From Sanskrit to Teaching Nobility

With his father Friedrich had been studying Persian, but just like the informal education he had received in Jerusalem, his father’s house in Detmold would not grant him the credentials needed for a career. Amid growing numbers of students pursuing a university education in Germany in the 1870s and increased enrolment in Oriental studies, Friedrich Rosen inscribed at the university of Leipzig as a student of philology on 28 May 1877.¹¹⁶ During the academic year 1877/78 he sat in lectures of Karl Friedrich Christian Brugmann, Johann Heinrich Hübschmann and Ernst Windisch on Sanskrit grammar and literature, by Moritz Trautmann on English grammar and by Conrad Hermann on general grammar and language philosophy, and took a historical course on German antiquity by Wilhelm Arndt.¹¹⁷

The university of Leipzig had been a centre of learning dating back to the early fifteenth century, and had by the mid-nineteenth century developed into a main destination in German lands for students of Oriental studies from all over the world.¹¹⁸ Orientalistik at Leipzig was shaped especially by the Arabist Heinrich Leberecht Fleischer, who followed the example of his teacher Silvestre

115 Georg Rosen to Sophie Klingemann, 9 January 1876, Nr. 64, D 72 Rosen-Klingemann, LAV NRW OWL; Friedrich Rosen, 1926, Hinterlassene Manuskripte I, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 31.

116 Wokoek, *German Orientalism*, 143–44; “Studentenliste Universität Leipzig,” Rep 01 16 07 c039, UAL (Leipzig, 1877–78).

117 Verzeichniss der als gehört bescheinigten Vorlesungen, 1877–8, 506, Rep B 058, UAL.

118 Klaus Mylius, “Zu den progressiven Traditionen der Orientalistik an der Leipziger Universität bis zum Jahre 1945,” *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift. Karl-Marx-Universität Leipzig. Gesellschafts- und Sprachwissenschaftliche Reihe* 28, no. 1 (1979): 7–14; Hartmut Zwahr and Jens Blecher, eds., *Geschichte der Universität Leipzig 1409–2009. Das neunzehnte Jahrhundert 1830/31–1909* (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 2010); Mangold, “Weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft”, 91–100; Wokoek, *German Orientalism*, 47.

de Sacy at Paris and worked along the lines of “strictly rational text critique”.¹¹⁹ By the 1870s the study of Indo-European languages – with Semitic languages the main subject of Oriental studies in Germany – experienced a renewed blossoming at Leipzig and other German universities. Universities lacked programmes in the modern European languages, such as French, English and German (or modern Middle Eastern languages). Often studied together with comparative linguistics, Sanskrit was for many students an approximation to studying languages that did not exist as independent fields, as Wokoeck demonstrated.¹²⁰ A pronounced interest of German Orientalists in language families and their categorisations framed not only their scholarly work, but also the creation of chairs in Oriental languages at German universities. Arabic became a strong focus of Semitic languages (next to Hebrew, Aramaic and Syriac), while Sanskrit was the dominating focus of Indo-Germanic studies and comparative linguistic studies.¹²¹ Iranistik, the study of ancient and modern Iranian languages, did not properly develop into its own discipline at German universities until the twentieth century, as it was overshadowed by Sanskrit in its Indo-European language family.

Rosen did not stay at Leipzig for long, and missed out on seeing his professor Ernst Windisch, a scholar of Sanskrit and Celtic languages and a formative figure in the development of Indo-German comparative studies, cause an uproar in the academic field with his work on the supposedly formative Greek influences on ancient Indian drama in 1882.¹²² But while in Leipzig Rosen managed to get himself incarcerated in the university prison for three days on account of “grober Unfug” (disorderly conduct), after he and four fellow students had been caught in the act of extinguishing street lights with “axes” around the university quarters at an ungodly hour.¹²³ The later principal of Hyderabad College, Nishikanta Chattopadhyaya (1852–1910), who pursued his doctorate in Leipzig around the same time, found it “difficult to square such exuberant animal spirits” that he found at Germany universities “with the dignity and the duties of

119 Mangold, “Weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft”, 91.

120 Klaus Mylius, “Bedeutende Traditionen der Indologie an der Universität Leipzig,” *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift. Karl-Marx-Universität Leipzig. Gesellschafts- und Sprachwissenschaftliche Reihe* 28, no. 1 (1979): 50–51; Wokoeck, *German Orientalism*, 121.

121 Mangold, “Weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft”, 102.

122 Christian Blangstrup, ed., “Windisch, Ernst Wilh. Oskar,” in *Salmonsens Konversations Leksikon* (Copenhagen: A/S J. H. Schultz Forlagsboghhandel, 1928), 218; Stache-Rosen, *German Indologists*, 106–7.

123 Gerichtsakte des Königlichen Universitätsgericht, December–January 1877–8, GA 10 / L16 Bd. 75, UAL.

serious scholarship”.¹²⁴ Shortly after, Rosen left Leipzig and the field of Indology for the time being. After a year of military service in Munich, he continued with his studies in the field of Romance and English philology at the École Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris and at Göttingen university, where he received a teachers certificate in 1883.¹²⁵ A shortage of positions at universities often made students of Eastern languages in Germany look elsewhere for employment to secure their livelihood. A few pursued careers in theology, while others worked in the growing Oriental collections of university and state libraries. Positions in the diplomatic service were all but unattainable, as law students of noble background and independent means were usually hired. Only in the consular service in far-away lands were scholars hired.

Another fall-back option was to work as a secondary school teacher. The grammar focus in Sanskrit and comparative linguistics could be drawn on, and should a position at a university open up the teaching experience would come in handy.¹²⁶ Rosen took up teaching at the Lyceum II in Hanover in 1882. In 1884 he became private teacher at the castle of Kamenz (Kamieniec) of the three sons of Prince Albrecht of Prussia, in whose regiment Rosen did reserve duty.¹²⁷ His skills as a language teacher were what landed him his next position in illustrious circles – this time at the viceregal court of India. During a stay in London in the summer of 1885 the later conservative politician George Wyndham recommended Rosen to Lady Harriot Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava, the wife of the Indian viceroy, Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, 1st Marquess of Dufferin and Ava – henceforth Lady and Lord Dufferin – who invited Rosen to come along with their son Terence to India in the winter. The Dufferins had known Rosen’s father Georg and his mother Serena from Lord Dufferin’s mission to Syria in the aftermath of the Lebanon civil war in 1860.¹²⁸ Rosen was to become Terence’s private teacher in

124 Nisikānta Chattopādhyāya, “Reminiscences of the German University Life. (Wahrheit und Dichtung),” in *Three Lectures: Reminiscences of the German University Life; the True Theosophist; and the Mricchakatikam, or, the Toy Cart. a Lecture* (Bombay: Education Society’s Steam Press, 1895), 7.

125 Promotionsakte Friedrich Rosen, 1891, Phil Fak Prom 5288, UAL; Rautenberg, Empfehlungsschreiben, 18 April 1887, UII.1136, Personalakten 012577, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Paul Boyer, 1 June 1909, copy, ASWPC.

126 Wokoeck, *German Orientalism*, 129.

127 Friedrich Rosen to Harriot Dufferin, 29 October 1885, 116, Vol 103 Neg 4329, BL IOR; Friedrich Rosen, Questionnaire, 1890, Personalakten 012577, PA AA; Promotionsakte Friedrich Rosen, 1891, Phil Fak Prom 5288, UAL.

128 Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Arthur Nicolson, 25 January 1886, F130–23, BL EM – Dufferin Collection; Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Friedrich Rosen, 6 No-

French and German in preparation for the British diplomatic entrance exams. But the express purpose was also for Rosen to continue studying Persian and Sanskrit while in India in hope of finding a position there for a few years and then return to teach at a European university. The same summer he had gotten engaged in London to Nina Roche, daughter of the French teacher and littérateur Antonin Roche and through her pianist mother Emily, also a grand-daughter of Ignaz Moscheles. For Friedrich's chance to return East he and Nina postponed the marriage and in December 1885 he boarded a ship to Calcutta.¹²⁹



Fig. 1.4. Nina Roche. Watercolour by her sister, Octavia Roche, April 1884.

vember 1891, Dufferin, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen, 1926, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte I*, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 31.

129 Friedrich Rosen to Hariot Dufferin, 2 September 1885, 7, Vol 103 Neg 4329, BL IOR; Friedrich Rosen to Hariot Dufferin, 29 October 1885, 116, Vol 103 Neg 4329, BL IOR; J. L. Pattisson to Frederick Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, 11 December 1885, 113, Vol. 36 Neg 4360, BL IOR; Henry J. Roche, "Roche-Moscheles Family Tree," *Descendants of Jean Antoine (Antonin) Roche and Emily Mary Moscheles (Mumi)*, July 1978 HRPC; E. Denison Ross, "Obituary. Friedrich Rosen," *The Times*, 29 November 1935.

Chapter 2

Amanat's *Indar Sabha* and the Beginnings of a Career. Hindustani Theatre in British Imperialism, Indian Nationalism and German Orientalistik

1 Introduction

"Indra-Sabha is an original production of Lucknow. It is a Hindu idea, worked and adopted to Mahomedan taste... The plot is simple, and the management is not complex... The conversation is carried on in songs and verses, of which the sentiments and acting are chaste and elegant." P.C. Mookherji, 1883.

"La cour d'Indra (*Indra-Sabha*) est un bizarre amalgame d'éléments persans, indiens et européens." Sylvain Lévi, 1890.

"The last flower of poetry that grew at the cheerful Lucknow court, shortly before the final blow destroyed this colourful glass house, was Amānat's *Indar Sabhā*". Annemarie Schimmel, 1975.

"In *Indar Sabha* and its descendants, playwrights employed ancient Indian and Indo-Persian myths and folklore to evoke an idealised past, and a paradigm of the present, that was contrasted, often allegorically, with the increasingly oppressive British Imperial domination." Afroz Taj, 2007.¹

Friedrich Rosen found his way back to "the Orient" as the teacher of the son of India's viceroy Lord Dufferin in 1886 and 1887. While witnessing British imperial administration up front at the viceregal court, he took off to explore Northern India on his own. In sharp contrast to the imperial life he was embedded in the various forms of theatre, dance, literature and music he encountered on his own kindled his interest in contemporary Indian cultural developments. A few years later this resulted in Rosen's doctoral dissertation on the modern Hindustani theatre drama *Indar Sabha* by Agha Hasan Amanat – a unique work in German Orientalistik at the time. Rosen's introduction to the "interesting development" of modern Indian theatre contained proto-nationalist notions contradictory to dominant Indological discourse and was not met with recognition

¹ P.C. Mookherji, *The Pictorial Lucknow* (Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 2003), 188; Sylvain Lévi, *Le théâtre indien* (Paris: Émile Bouillon, 1890), 405; Annemarie Schimmel, *Classical Urdu Literature from the Beginning to Iqbal* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1975), 213; Afroz Taj, *The Court of Indar and the Rebirth of North Indian Drama* (Delhi: Anjuman Taraqqi Urdu (Hind), 2007), 2–3.

in European academia. Nevertheless, the year and a half Rosen spent at the Indian viceregal court and travelling the country would come to inform much of his subsequent politics. India gave Rosen a leg up, leading him back to Orientalist scholarship and eventually into German foreign affairs, where he could draw on his close up experience of British imperial rule in India.

The genesis of Rosen's German translation of the *Indar Sabha* bypasses some of the historiography on German Indology. Pollock's argument of "Deep Orientalism" that connected German Sanskrit studies in the nineteenth century through an inward vectoring to Nazi Indological productions is largely unproductive. The same goes for the acrimonious debate between Grünendahl and Adlur that ensued. Contrary to Schimmel's vast exaggeration of the academic and popular appeal of the *Indar Sabha* in Germany, Rosen's work was a singular piece of scholarship on Hindustani and modern India in Europe at the time. While Rosen read the *Indar Sabha* as combining Islamic-Persian and some Turkic with Hindu-Indian elements, and spoke of Indian literature as close to its "Germanic sister", the difference between Indo-European and Semitic, Turkic or other languages was not of concern. In place of Pollock's Aryan "racial consanguinity", Rosen saw kinship through language families, which did not exclude or demote other linguistic or cultural influences. Furthermore, Rosen – like Saksena and Taj – severed his analysis of the *Indar Sabha* from the question of how this nineteenth century piece related to ancient Sanskrit theatre and posited that the modern development should be studied on its own terms. Qureshi's study on the *Indar Sabha* in contrast thought it necessary to connect modern Hindustani drama to its supposed origins in "the sacred soil of Pakistan", refuting the theses of some European Indologists, like Rosen's doctoral supervisor Windisch, that Greek influence on Indian drama was formative. Equally, Marchand's discussion of the German Sanskritists in India in the era of the Raj does not shed further light on engagements with contemporary art forms like Hindustani drama.²

Rosen was fascinated by what Mohamed called the "composite culture" of contemporary India, and found it encapsulated in the "multicultural" theatre play *Indar Sabha*, which as Taj argues should be interpreted as an early form

2 Pollock, "Deep Orientalism?", 82; Grünendahl, "History in the Making"; Schimmel, *Urdu Literature to Iqbāl*, 213–14; Friedrich Rosen, *Die Indarsabhā des Amānat. Neuindisches Singspiel in lithographischem Originaltext mit Übersetzung und Erklärungen sowie einer Einleitung über das hindustanische Drama* (Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1892), III; Trautmann, *Aryans and British India*, 9–10; Ram Babu Saksena, *A History of Urdu Literature* (Allahabad: Ram Narain Lal, 1927), 346; Taj, *Court of Indar*, 36–56; M. Aslam Qureshi, *Wajid Ali Shah's Theatrical Genius* (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 1987), 112–17; Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 190–93.

of nationalist protest against British imperialism.³ Studies speaking to the history of the *Indar Sabha* and Hindustani drama more broadly by Saksena and Rizavi did not engage significantly with Rosen's translation, but found it noteworthy that the play had been translated to German and like Taj passingly corrected some mistakes Rosen made.⁴ Drawing on Sharar, Oldenburg, Llewellyn-Jones and Qureshi on the history of Lucknow, Awadh and its last king Wajid 'Ali Shah and his theatrical oeuvre,⁵ Williams on the spread of Awadhi music and dance to Bengal after the annexation of Awadh in 1856, Gupt, Hansen and Bhatia on theatre productions and the politics of theatre in India,⁶ Ferguson on the symbolic role of Lucknow in British empire and studies on the Dufferins⁷, this chapter seeks to investigate how through "the galvanic force of a third party: the lodestone of the British empire"⁸ Rosen came to dissent with prevalent Indological scholarship in Germany and Europe in pursuit of his personal interests, gaining knowledge about India and a career in Orientalist scholarship.

3 Taj's study is in part a defence of Urdu language and culture in the early twenty-first century and follows a similar line to what Saksena wrote in 1941: "The Urdu language does not belong to one exclusive community. It is a common heritage... It is a treasure of priceless gems to be cherished, preserved and appreciated. Hindus, Muslims, Europeans and Indo-Europeans have built it up with all the best that they possessed. Such a common heritage which is indivisible will surely not be allowed to perish or sink into obscurity." Malik Mohamed, *The Foundations of the Composite Culture in India* (Delhi: Aakar, 2007); Taj, *Court of Indar*, 129–66; Ram Babu Saksena, *European & Indo-European Poets of Urdu & Persian* (Lucknow: Newul Kishore Press, 1941), 298.

4 Saksena, *Urdu Literature*, 353; Syed Masud Hasan Rizavi, "Syed Masud Hasan Rizavi on Urdu Drama Aur Stage," *Urdu Drama Aur Stage*, Syed Masud Hasan Rizavi, *Indian Literature* 3, no. 1 (1959): 138–40; Taj, *Court of Indar*, 148.

5 Abdul Halim Sharar, *Lucknow. The Last Phase of an Oriental Culture*, trans. E.S. Harcourt and Fakhir Hussain, (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001); Veena Talwar Oldenburg, *The Making of Colonial Lucknow, 1856–1877* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001); Rosie Llewellyn-Jones, *A Fatal Friendship. The Nawabs, the British and the City of Lucknow*, (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001); Rosie Llewellyn-Jones, *The Last King in India. Wajid 'Ali Shah, 1822–1887* (London: Hurst & Company, 2014); M. Aslam Qureshi, *Theatrical Genius*.

6 Richard David Williams, "Songs Between Cities: Listening to Courtesans in Colonial North India," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 3 (2017): 1–20; Richard David Williams, "Music, Lyrics, and the Bengali Book: Hindustani Musicology in Calcutta, 1818–1905," *Music & Letters* 97, no. 3 (2016): 465–95; Somnath Gupt, *The Parsi Theatre: Its Origins and Development*, trans. Kathryn Hansen (Calcutta: Seagull Books, 2005); Kathryn Hansen, *Grounds for Play: The Nautanki Theatre of North India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Nandi Bhatia, *Acts of Authority / Acts of Resistance. Theatre and Politics in Colonial and Postcolonial India* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004).

7 Ferguson, *Empire*.

8 Manjapra, *Age of Entanglement*, 2–3.

2 The Dufferins. Expanding and Integrating Empire

Who were Lord and Lady Dufferin, at whose British viceregal court the German teacher Friedrich Rosen would spend a year and a half and to whom Rosen would dedicate his *Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar* in 1898?⁹ The historiography of Lord Dufferin's reign in India is rather thin, as the last decades of the nineteenth century are eclipsed by the more cataclysmic years of the Indian Uprising of 1857, the famine in the 1870s and the later policies of expansion under Lord Curzon (r. 1899–1905). Discussion of the Dufferins in histories with Indian subaltern and British imperial approaches is scant. The description of Metcalf and Metcalf is characteristic:

The viceroys who presided over the final decades of the century – Dufferin (1884–8), Landsdowne (1888–94), and Elgin (1894–9) – were... ‘imperial handyman’ all. Unshaken by the fissures revealed in the Ilbert Bill controversy and imagining a future like the past, they endeavoured to secure the economic interests of empire, establish secure borders, and provide a government of limited responsibilities.¹⁰

Brushed over is the annexation of Burma (Myanmar) under Dufferin's watch in 1887, that the ratio of conquering troops was two Indians to one Briton, or that Dufferin was awarded the title earl of Ava in 1888 – after the ancient name for parts of what was then Burma.¹¹ The continued British economic exploitation of India, and Lord Dufferin's machinations with the Silver standard, as well as his own misgivings at the state of Indian finances also do not figure in meta-histories of British Indian history. Absent as well are the foreign and in-

⁹ Friedrich Rosen, *Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar. Containing a Short Grammar, Dialogues and Extracts from Nasir-Eddin Shah's Diaries, Tales, Etc. and a Vocabulary* (London: Luzac & Co, 1898).

¹⁰ The Ilbert Bill was “a controversial measure proposed in 1883 that sought to allow senior Indian magistrates to preside over cases involving British subjects in India... The bitter controversy surrounding the measure deepened antagonism between British and Indians and was a prelude to the formation of the Indian National Congress the following year.” Dufferin is entirely absent in Bose and Jalal's description of British concessions to the fledgling Indian nationalist movement and is a nonentity in Ferguson's description of the “white mutiny” after the Ilbert Bill was introduced. “Ilbert Bill. 1884, India,” in *Encyclopædia Britannica*. <http://www.britannica.com/event/Ilbert-Bill>; Barbara D. Metcalf and Thomas R. Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India*, 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 123; Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal, *Modern South Asia. History, Culture, Political Economy* (London: Routledge, 1998); Ferguson, *Empire*, 199–200.

¹¹ Charles E. Drummond Black, *The Marquess of Dufferin and Ava. Diplomatist, Viceroy, Statesman*, (London: Hutchinson & Co, 1903), 246–60; Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Fitzjames Stephen, 6 March 1886, F130–23, BL EM – Dufferin Collection.

terior affairs of the British Indian government at the time: German interests in the Indian ocean, favourable Persian attitudes to Germany, extensive railroad constructions in the subcontinent, the legal rights of Indian widows, Russia and Afghanistan along the northern border, rebels in conquered Burma, the growing influence of Wahabis at Bhopal under Muhammad Sadik Hassan and his sending of emissaries to the Arabian peninsula and into Sudan.¹²

There are some biographical accounts of the Dufferins by Davenport-Hines and Foster. In Davenport-Hines' description Dufferin was the apotheosis of a British imperialist:

He was imaginative, sympathetic, warm-hearted, and gloriously versatile. He pacified Lebanon, won the loyalty of Canadians, settled the principles for the government of Egypt, averted war with Russia, annexed Burma, made a fluent speech in dog-Latin in Iceland... made a lifelong study of Egyptian hieroglyphics, scandalised St. Petersburg society by hopping and grunting like a pig while playing Dumb-crambo, startled Paris by bicycling publicly, and conversed in Persian with the Shah... He would never commit himself to an opinion 'until it becomes necessary to arrive at a practical decision'... He had read enormously... wrote elegant verses, sketched attractively, danced with graceful brio, and cultivated many literary friendships. His faults were trivial: he was lazy, vain, and over-sensitive to criticism... he spread an unusual amount of happiness.¹³

His wife, Lady Dufferin, Davenport-Hines praises as "that rarity, a governor's wife who strengthened her husband's hand", who was next to being an "intrepid traveller in rough or frightening conditions" also a "consummate actress in amateur theatricals."¹⁴ Less impassioned, Foster locates Lord and Lady Dufferin in some of the centrifugal forces of British empire:

¹² Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Arthur Nicolson, 14 June 1886, F130 – 23, BL EM – Dufferin Collection; Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Arthur Nicolson, 14 August 1886, F130 – 23, BL EM – Dufferin Collection; Drummond Black, *Dufferin and Ava*, 284 – 90; Bose and Jalal, *Modern South Asia*, 98 – 100. Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood Correspondence in India, 1887, Vol. 80 Neg 4338, BL IOR; Drummond Black, *Dufferin and Ava*, 213 – 45; Seema Alavi, *Muslim Cosmopolitanism in the Age of Empire* (Cambridge, MS: Harvard University Press, 2015), 306 – 18; Björn Berge, *Atlas der verschwundenen Länder. Weltgeschichte in 50 Briefmarken*, trans. Günther Fraunlob and Frank Zuber (Munich: Dtv, 2018), 78 – 79.

¹³ Richard Davenport-Hines, "Blackwood, Frederick Temple Hamilton-Temple-, First Marquess of Dufferin and Ava (1826 – 1902)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2008). <http://www.oxforddnb.com/index/101031914/Frederick-Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood>.

¹⁴ Richard Davenport-Hines, "Blackwood, Harriot Georgina Hamilton-Temple-, Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava (1843 – 1936)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2008). <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-1000981>.

Although members of the British aristocracy the Dufferins moved readily into public service. Dufferin tended to imperial and diplomatic realms to escape moral and political dilemmas of being a Protestant Irish peer and landlord. In his public writing he both defended the property rights of Irish landholders and anguished over the misery of Irish tenants during the social and political upheavals brought on by the Great Famine.¹⁵

When the famine was at its worst in the late 1840s, Lord Dufferin feared his assassination and in the following decades liquidated his land holdings in anticipation of changing political circumstances in Ireland. Dufferin's first diplomatic mission had been in Syria in 1860–1, where he had met Friedrich Rosen's father Georg. Next to bringing about a resolution to the civil war between Druze and Maronite Christians, Dufferin also ensured continuing British influence in the mountain range to prevent French preponderance. He already laid eyes on the leadership of India in the early 1870s but was sent to Canada as high commissioner instead. There, he extensively toured the Canadian provinces:

Dufferin saw these tours as a duty associated with the consolidation of Canada, and thus of the British empire in North America... His considerable popularity, and his occasional stress on the role of cultural minorities and immigrant groups in Canada, enhanced his inclusive imperialist-nationalist message... [Lady Dufferin] assumed responsibility for readings and well-attended plays, in which she took leading roles.

From Canada, Lord Dufferin was sent as ambassador to St. Petersburg during the Tory government of Disraeli, and at his next posting as ambassador in Constantinople in 1881 he was closely involved in the "international machinations which followed [the debt default of Egypt] and which led to the British invasion of Egypt".¹⁶

When the Dufferins took the helm of viceregal Indian rule in 1884 they were a couple skilled in securing and enlarging British empire, pacifying dissent and integrating various ethnic groups through cultural and social work.¹⁷ Irish peers the Dufferins moved on the margins of British high society, shaping their thought and interactions in their rule of local populations. Lord Dufferin attempted to protect Indian peasants from overt exploitation, while opposing Irish home

¹⁵ Ben Forster, "Blackwood, Frederick Temple, 1st Marquess of Dufferin and Ava," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. 13 (Toronto: University of Toronto / Université Laval, 1994). http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/blackwood_frederick_temple_13E.html.

¹⁶ Forster, "Dufferin."

¹⁷ Amanda Andrews, "The Great Ornamentals: New Vice-Regal Women and Their Imperial Work 1884–1914" (PhD diss., University of Western Sydney, 2004), 1–2, 23, 45; Éadaoin Agnew, *Imperial Women Writers in Victorian India: Representing Colonial Life, 1850–1910* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

rule as a dangerous precedent for Britain's place in India, and Lady Dufferin showed herself aware of the "mists of our own European prejudices".¹⁸ Before departing India in 1888 the viceroy wrote:

We are irritating the natives out here in exactly the same manner as for hundreds of years we have been irritating the Irish... [with] that intolerable and vulgar brutality which the strong English race always manifests towards more inferior and sensitive populations.¹⁹

To their court Friedrich Rosen came to prepare son Terence for his German and French entry exams to the British Foreign Office.²⁰ With his now useful education in "Oriental" languages, the thirty-year-old Rosen knew the chances his Indian sojourn with such prominent employers would offer.

His hosts in India can tell us something beyond the view of being "imperial handymen" or "warm-hearted, and gloriously versatile" modernisers with sympathies for their subjects, who knew, as Rudyard Kipling wrote of them, that "there can be no room ... for good intentions in one's work".²¹ The Dufferins embodied what Osterhammel described as the logic and practice of imperial integration with force as a last resort.²² Their routines, habits and predilections in imperial India provided the setting for Rosen's encounters and studies that lead to his dissertation on the *Indar Sabha*; an imperial setting not untypical for many Orient scholars from Germany or Europe venturing into their spaces of desire. The circumstance that a foreign national, a German, was attached to the British court mattered little, as Rosen brought with him useful vocational skills and bonded with his employers culturally.

¹⁸ Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Fitzjames Stephen, 6 March 1886, F130–23, BL EM – Dufferin Collection; Daniel Sanjiv Roberts, "'Merely Birds of Passage': Lady Hariot Dufferin's Travel Writings and Medical Work in India, 1884–1888," *Women's History Review* 15, no. 3 (July 2006 2006): 448; Cornelia Sorabji, *Love and Life Behind the Purdah* (London: Freemantle & Co, 1901).

¹⁹ Davenport-Hines, "Lord Dufferin."

²⁰ Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Friedrich Rosen, 14 February 1891, Dufferin, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen, *Orientalische Erinnerungen*, 1926, ASWPC, 56.

²¹ Davenport-Hines, "Lord Dufferin."

²² Osterhammel, *Verwandlung der Welt*, 610.

3 Life, Politics and Theatre at the Viceregal Court

On 16 December 1884, shortly after the Dufferins first arrived in Calcutta, Lady Dufferin provided an extensive description of their daily routine in her diary.²³ Lord Dufferin got up early. The family had breakfast together on the balcony of their residence by 8:30 a.m. At 10 a.m. the viceroy would meet with his British assistant for a discussion of current affairs. A major was in charge of the household and a captain responsible for music, having the house band play from 8 until 9 p.m. during dinner. Another official was in charge of military, stables and carriages: "The carriages are plain, without gilding or ornament, but we nearly always drive with four horses, postillions, footmen, outriders, and escort, all in scarlet and gold liveries." The principal servant also wore scarlet and gold. Other servants wore "red tunics, white trousers, bare feet, white or red and gold sashes wound round their waists and white turbans. Everybody has a body servant to accompany at all times."²⁴ Rosen sketched a moustached man with a white turban and wide clothes down to his knees bringing a tray with two full tumbler glasses and a bottle in his other hand.²⁵ Adding to this plethora of household members came other servants: sentries in hallways, one "caste" to arrange flowers, one for cleaning plates, others for shoes, filling up jugs of water, and serving tea. Rosen observed that certain castes were not allowed to prepare or touch foods, requiring Europeans to portray cultural sensitivity in interacting with most Indians at court.²⁶ Sometimes Lady Dufferin left the house for walks or visits in the afternoon. The main reasons for leaving the house, she noted, were to go to the zoo or to watch a game of polo. Dinner was at 8 p.m. and the evening was sometimes spent with staff.²⁷

Life felt monotonous, but would be interrupted by *durbars* (*levées*). Drawing on Mughal Court practices the British in India developed ceremonial events that ran analogous to the celebration and demonstration of hierarchical structures on the British Isles but surpassed them in extravagance. As Cannadine has shown, Indian *nawabs* (provincial rulers) and landlords were seen by the British akin to English nobility and cultivated as a favoured, ornamental class. Their friendly

23 Hariot Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava, *Our Viceregal Life in India. Selections from My Journal 1884–1888*, 2 vols., (London: John Murray, 1890).

24 Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, *Our Viceregal Life in India*, vol. 1, 14–15.

25 Friedrich Rosen, "Servant at Table. Peg Lao!" 1886/7, pencil sketch, Curiosa, ASWPC.

26 Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, *Our Viceregal Life*, vol. 1, 16; Friedrich Rosen, "Das Kastenwesen im heutigen Indien," *Deutsche Revue über das gesamte nationale Leben der Gegenwart* 15, no. 3 (1890): 179–93.

27 Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, *Our Viceregal Life*, vol. 1, 17.

disposition was important for the stability of British rule and they benefitted financially from the power sharing arrangement.²⁸ The first viceroy's durbar of the Dufferins with the local Indian elites was held a few days after they arrived in 1884. Every minute the viceroy greeted twenty-five Indian guests Lady Dufferin recounted:

He says they are very fine men, and that they came forward in a smiling, frank way; they salute and present the hilt of their swords, which the Viceroy touches, and then they pass on. I think there were about 1800 men at this levée. His Excellency was very smart! He wore his Lord-Lieutenant's uniform, with four stars and the Indian Empire (a sort of medal like a flat rose) on his coat, and the diamond medallion of the Star of India hanging from his throat, with the grand cordon of that Order.²⁹

Another durbar with the three maharajahs from Jodhpore, Bhurtpur and Faridkot Lady Dufferin described, as the women remaining in hiding, a guard of honour, salutes of 21, 17 or 11 guns (according to the ranking of the maharajahs), followed by polite conversation through interpreters.³⁰ In demonstration of suzerainty, protocol then demanded the presentation of mohurs by the servants of the maharajahs, which the Viceroy touched, but refused to accept. Mohurs were gold coins minted under the Mughals from the mid-sixteenth century until 1856. The British continued to use mohurs, jointly minting the names of the British sovereigns and local maharajas.³¹ At the farewell of the durbar the viceroy presented small gifts to maharajahs.³² This British-Indian gift giving, known as *khil-lat*, was parsimonious in comparison to the "Oriental-style ostentation" practiced by the Indian princes and kings before, but did in Oldenburg's words "manage to imitate the symbolic effect of the nawabi ceremonial *darbar* on a far smaller budget".³³ After such an event Lord Dufferin "went and unbent himself over a game of tennis."³⁴

In letters to their friends Lady Dufferin complained frequently about the lack of interesting activities and Lord Dufferin wrote long rants about the unbearably

²⁸ Cannadine, *Ornamentalism*, 18–21, 40–48.

²⁹ Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, *Our Viceregal Life*, vol. 1, 18.

³⁰ Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood Correspondence in India, 1887, Vol. 80 Neg 4338, BL IOR.

³¹ George Cuhaj, Thomas Michael, et al. eds., *Standard Catalog of World Coins, 1801–1900*, 6 (Iola: Krause Publications, 2009), 698.

³² Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, *Our Viceregal Life*, vol. 1, 19.

³³ Oldenburg, *Colonial Lucknow*, 247–50.

³⁴ Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, *Our Viceregal Life*, vol. 1, 21.



Fig. 2.1. "Bring a shot! Servant at table". Pencil sketch by Friedrich Rosen, 1886/7.

hot or rainy weather interrupting his tennis matches.³⁵ Only shooting clay pigeons lessened his boredom, he wrote to his brother-in-law, Arthur Nicolson. Nicolson found himself in “banishment” in Tehran as envoy to the Shah’s court and related to his misery.³⁶ But there was some fun to be had. There were large hunting outings, often at the invitation of local maharajahs. The Dufferins cultivated particularly good relations with the maharajah of Varanasi (Benares), as Rosen noted, because he ruled over “the central point of the Indian religion” that was sought out by pilgrims from all over the subcontinent.³⁷ On a visit to Varanasi in 1886 the Dufferins and the maharajah went stalking in a nearby arbour:

The great amusement of the shoot here is that you never know what sort of animal will appear next. We counted thirteen species that we did see, and we might have seen a bear too... The monkeys too, whom we treated as fellow-creatures, were most amusing... In the middle of the day we had lunch, and between the beats we looked at all the dead animals and discoursed upon our adventures.³⁸

Rosen and Terence had been travelling on their own and missed the hunt. But they joined the more formal programme the maharajah had put together for his guests, mirroring the ceremonial of the viceroy’s *darbar*. Precious gifts were exchanged and receptions held. Carried around town on sedans and elephants, provided by the maharajah, the viceroy’s party toured the town. Rosen and Terence took off after a while, exploring the temples in which Shiva was venerated, the great mosque of Aurangzeb (1618–1707), the palace of the king of Nepal and took an interest in the fakirs of the city. The evenings were spent on the maharajah’s floating palace on the Ganges, while *bajadars* (female dancers) danced and sang for the entertainment of the maharajah and the viceroy, who were served with sweets and water pipes.³⁹ Despite all this noble confraternisation, Rosen noticed that there were no joint meals, but that the maharajah would have dishes sent to the viceroy’s quarters. Caste rules prohibited the brahmin maharajah from eating with the unclean viceroy and his party.⁴⁰

35 Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Edward Thornton, 14 June 1886, F130–23, BL EM – Dufferin Collection.

36 Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Arthur Nicolson, 16 September 1886, F130–23, BL EM – Dufferin Collection.

37 Friedrich Rosen, “Briefe aus Indien. Benares,” *Frankfurter Zeitung* 311 (7 November 1886).

38 Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, *Our Viceregal Life*, vol. 2, 12.

39 Friedrich Rosen, “Briefe aus Indien. Ein Ausflug in das Himalaya-Gebirge,” *Frankfurter Zeitung* 252 (9 September 1886); Friedrich Rosen, “Benares.”

40 Friedrich Rosen, “Kastenwesen,” 183.

Next to participating in some of these official cultural and sporting events, Rosen also connected on a more individual level with the Dufferins' efforts to integrate into Indian society from above. With Lady Dufferin he shared an interest in theatre. Her background as an amateur theatre actress in Ottawa and Constantinople had her look out for theatre performances in a number of places across India, which she described in some detail in her diaries.⁴¹ While Lord Dufferin was busy occupying the place, she attended a Burmese play in the "Umbrella Room" of the palace at Mandalay Hill. Unconcerned by the annexation, she was ashamed that she had to hurry the performance, which would otherwise have lasted three days. "The story was that of a princess who was to be given to the one out of seven suitors who could bend a certain bow and shoot an arrow from it", she described the plot. She was impressed with it and thought it could be an admirable successor to the London *The Mikado* production.⁴² Her impressions of Burma were generally positive:

The Burmese appear to be a most pleasing, nice people to do with, but some of their very virtues make them difficult to govern and to depend upon. Their police are no good, they neither stand and fight nor quite give way. However, for better, for worse, Burmah is annexed. It seems a rich country and Mandalay is a lovely place, and we, at any rate, have had a delightful visit here.

At Mysore, Lady Dufferin saw a Kanarese play and a dance, both shortened for her benefit.⁴³ After all, the Dufferins had fixed bedtimes.

These were only some of the performances Lady Dufferin would attend during the sixteen months stay of Rosen in India. Some of these performances were quite to her liking. Others, she realised, were hastily arranged and performed by lay dancers.⁴⁴ What evaded her was that all plays were selected and performed in a prostate way to mollify and entertain her and the viceroy.⁴⁵ Lady Dufferin could not see theatre performances independently, but would be invited at the side of her husband, the viceroy of India. These must have been extremely artificial and

⁴¹ Forster, "Dufferin."

⁴² The comic opera *The Mikado*, a "pure invention" of Japan, opened in London in 1885 and was wildly successful across Europe. Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, *Our Viceregal Life*, vol. 1, 317–18; Éadaoin Agnew and Leon Litvack, "The Subcontinent as Spectator Sport: The Photographs of Harriot Lady Dufferin, Vicereine of India," *History of Photography* 30, no. 4 (2006): 357; Josephine Lee, *The Japan of Pure Invention: Gilbert and Sullivan's The Mikado* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010).

⁴³ Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, *Our Viceregal Life*, vol. 2, 91.

⁴⁴ Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, *Our Viceregal Life*, vol. 2, 138.

⁴⁵ Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, *Our Viceregal Life*, vol. 2, 65–66.

clumsy events. Modifications to plays went in sync with the embarrassment hosts would have experienced with having to receive the viceregal couple, without Lady Dufferin remaining in purdah.⁴⁶ Any sort of criticism would certainly not be shown on the stages of their Indian hosts, who were dependent on the viceroy. Representing the British crown, the Dufferins travelled in ornate carriages and were received at palaces across India with specifically prepared entertainment programmes. Lady Dufferin made an effort to better understand the terminology and concepts of theatre and dance presented to her but for her to take off down the beaten track or stumble into a folk performance lasting until the early morning hours would have been improper. She was aware of some of these limitations, but was not too bothered.

Neither was the vicereine, of course, concerned by the 1876 Censorship Act of the British Indian government having established a “register of all scrutinized plays” and “prohibit[ed] dramatic performances which [were] seditious or obscene, or otherwise prejudicial to the public interests” that caused plays to be cleansed of overt political expressions and criticism to be phrased in religious terms. This wide reaching act of cultural censorship came in response to the adaptation of the play *Nil Darpan* into one of the first commercial theatre productions of Calcutta in the early 1870s. As Rosen observed during his stay in India, Dinabandhu Mitra’s 1858 *Nil Darpan* was still India’s most famous social drama. With its black humoured enactment of the British exploitation of forced Indian indigo farming it had fuelled the Indigo Revolt of 1859.⁴⁷ Less genuine forms of Indian theatre that Lady Dufferin saw were by and large the making of British imperialism.

There were also social theatre plays staged with the approval of the British government, like the theatre production *Hindu Society in the Twentieth Century*, compiled from a Bengali play and “expressly adapted for performance in English” on the occasion of festivities given by the viceroy to his employees and the press at the viceregal summer capital of Shimla in October 1886. The play followed feasting on luxuries, “indulgence in hobble bobble, pan sooparee, and a delicious siesta”, a round of gymkhanah sports and a tug of war “between Hindoos and Mahomedans”. The plot reads representative of the social reform visions many British imperialist reformers held:

⁴⁶ Purdah is a “practice that was inaugurated by Muslims and later adopted by various Hindus, especially in India, and that involves the seclusion of women from public observation by means of concealing clothing (including the veil) and by the use of high-walled enclosures, screens, and curtains within the home.” “Purdah,” in *Encyclopædia Britannica*. <http://www.britannica.com/topic/purdah>.

⁴⁷ Bhatia, *Theater and Politics*, 19–22, 44; Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 3–4.

Bilashini, a young lady, much in advance of the age, rejects a suitor for wearing the national mourning custom, and casts her lot in marriage with Mr. Gourikanto Karforma, a School-master. This position not satisfying her aspirations, she buys him a Press and establishes him as Joint Editor of a Vernacular newspaper in the hope of being able, through such agency, to effect the regeneration of the women of India.

The story continues with another man going off to civilised England to pursue a degree in medicine, with whom the protagonist falls in love next. Disaster strikes and the older generation pleads “to discard all premature attempts at social advancement” while the younger generation marches forward.⁴⁸ Acted out by an Indian cast, the inclusion of the play in the fête carried the fingerprints of Lady Dufferin's mission of improvement among women. Theatre should either entertain as part of ceremonial or bolster Britain's mission in India and was more function of imperial power politics than genuine artistic sensation. This was different for the teacher of her son, who gained entry to some of these illustrious occasions due to his affiliation but came equipped with linguistic skills and a scholarly interest in Indian art forms.

The maharajah of Varanasi staged a nautch performance on boats floating on the Ganges for the viceregal couple to enjoy from his riverside palace at Ramnagar. They were joined by Rosen. Lady Dufferin's descriptions of the festivities and artistic events remained pale and bored.⁴⁹ Rosen's impressions of the city and its cultural and religious vibrancy on the other hand radiated with fascination, which he sought to relay in objective terms to his German audience in an article he penned in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. After a description of the festive sceneries the maharajah had put up, Rosen expanded on the performance:

Der indische Tanz oder Nautsch besteht hauptsächlich aus Gesten der Hände und Finger, welche so kompliziert sind, daß ihre rechte Würdigung ein eigenes Studium erfordert. Jeder Finger, sagt der bewanderte Indier, ist ein Gedicht. Aus diesem Grund und weil sie die indische Musik ebenso wenig verstehen wie die Worte der Lieder, haben die meisten europäischen Reisenden sehr abfällig über den Nautsch geurteilt. Ich kann mich dem allgemeinen Verdammungsurteil nicht anschließen, sondern muß offen bekennen, daß ich

⁴⁸ Programme of the Fete Given by His Excellency the Viceroy to the Employees at the Private Secretary's Offices at Armsdell, 1886, ASWPC.

⁴⁹ Nautch is a form of “dance-song” prevalent across Northern India, then performed by travelling professionals, courtesans and in religious contexts. The narratives originated from medieval and antique Hindu epics, with the songs often following Persian literary genres. Margaret E. Walker, “The ‘Nautch’ Reclaimed: Women's Performance Practice in Nineteenth-Century North India,” *Journal of South Asian Studies* 37, no. 4 (2014): 553; Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, *Our Viceregal Life*, vol. 2, 16.

mit großem Genusse den Klängen der Lieder gelauscht habe, die mich sowohl dem Inhalte nach, als auch wegen ihrer eigentümlichen Melodien interessierten.⁵⁰

To provide a taste of the performances and the mix of cultures he experienced, Rosen translated one of the songs he heard the bajadars sing on the Ganges:

Sänger mit lieblich tönendem Mund
 Tue mir was Frisches, was Neues kund!
 Bring mir den Wein, der das Herz mir erfreut!
 Immer frischer und immer auf's Neu!

Singer with the lovely sounding mouth
 Make known to me something fresh, something new!
 Bring me the wine that delights my heart!
 Ever fresher and ever anew!

This was the first stanza from a poem by the Persian poet Shams ud-Din Muhammad Hafez (1315–1390). For his readers, Rosen identified him as a devout Muslim who had memorised the Quran by heart and thus been awarded the honorific religious title “hafez”. When writing the newspaper article several months after the event, Rosen raved that the melody still rung in his ear, something he tried to convey by translating the poem word by word, while maintaining the rhyme form. His readers were let know that this song was “also sung in Persian in India”.⁵¹ As Rosen learned in a conversation with the Hindu maharajah of Varanasi – author of his own collection of Persian poetry – this melange of languages and cultures was not unusual. It reflected the role Persian played as cultural and political lingua franca among all religions in India well into the twentieth century.⁵²

50 “The Indian dance or nautch consists mainly of hand and finger gestures, which are so complicated that their proper appreciation requires its own studies. Every finger, says the adept Indian, is a poem. Due to this reason and because they understand Indian music as little as the words of the songs, many European travellers have judged the nautch very disparagingly. I cannot align myself with this condemnation, but must openly profess that I listened with great pleasure to the sounds of the songs, which interested me both because of their content and because of their idiosyncratic melodies.” In the British colonial context nautanki dancers were often “exoticised or dismissed” and the dance seen as a debased art form representative of the “supposedly degenerate courts” of India. Walker reappraises the art of the tawaif dancers as “dance, song, music and gesture [that] were parts of an integrated and extemporised whole”. Friedrich Rosen, “Benares”; Walker, “‘Nautch’ Reclaimed,” 565.

51 Friedrich Rosen, “Benares.”

52 Fragner, *Persophonie*, 83; Colley, *The Ordeal of Elizabeth Marsh*, 171–72; Sharar, *Lucknow*, 99–101; Friedrich Rosen, “Die Urdû-Literatur,” in *Die Literaturen Indiens. Von Ihren Anfängen*

4 Persian and Hindustani as Pastime, Social Currency and Means of Politics

When Rosen decided to go to India as a teacher, the chance to improve and practice his Persian and Hindustani skills was a major motivation.⁵³ Rosen had studied Persian texts and poems with his father in Detmold and Sanskrit at university, but there is no indication that he had learned Hindustani or used Persian as a language of communication before 1886. In the dedication in his 1898 *Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar* to Lord Dufferin, Rosen expressed his “gratitude for the example set by him in the acquirement of the Persian language and in recollection of the pleasant hours spent, listening with him to a Persian story-teller in India”.⁵⁴ His gratitude to “His most honourable Excellency” was genuine, but as was common in British India signalling political association with a well-known figure would help advertise Rosen’s Persian self-study book on the British imperial market. The hours Rosen and the busy viceroy Dufferin had actually spent listening to Persian poetry together were likely not that many. But Dufferin thanked Rosen for the dedication, reflecting that Rosen’s relationship with the Dufferins was to a significant degree shaped and sustained by their common learning of Persian and Hindustani.⁵⁵

As of the summer of 1885 Lady Dufferin had started taking Hindustani lessons four times a week with someone she described as a Christian princess from Kashmir. They read short tracts and moral stories together. Her progress was slow.⁵⁶ Lord Dufferin, at first not aware of the differences between Persian and the variations of Hindustani in use in northern India, had only a marginally better knowledge of the language, but could pick out some of the Persian words when he listened to official speeches.⁵⁷ During the time that Rosen spent with them, Lord Dufferin’s Persian skills improved considerably, and he would still

bis zur Gegenwart, Helmut von Glasenapp, et al. (Potsdam: Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft Athenaion, 1929), 221.

⁵³ Hindustani was the pluricentric lingua franca of Northern India that exists today in two prevalent forms, Hindi and Urdu. During British rule Urdu, the variant in Persian script was strengthened and made into an administrative language next to English. Hindustani vocabulary contains words deriving from Persian, Sanskrit, Arabic and Turkic, with the Hindi variant more Sanskrit-based and the Urdu variant relying more on Persian. Friedrich Rosen to Harriot Dufferin, 2 September 1885, 7, Vol 103 Neg 4329, BL IOR.

⁵⁴ Friedrich Rosen, *Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar*, I.

⁵⁵ Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Friedrich Rosen, 14 March 1898, Dufferin, ASWPC.

⁵⁶ Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, *Our Viceregal Life*, vol. 1, 166–75.

⁵⁷ Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Arthur Nicolson, 25 January 1886, F130–23, BL EM – Dufferin Collection; Drummond Black, *Dufferin and Ava*, 307.

report to Rosen on his progress in Persian years later. As he wrote to Nicolson in Tehran in the summer of 1886, he managed to tell Grimm's *Fairy Tales* to his policemen in Persian without difficulties.⁵⁸ Finding conversation still difficult, Dufferin was reading Amir Khusraw's *Bagh-o Bahar* and Sa'di's *Gulistan*. Rosen also read both of these works while in India. Mir Amman's Hindustani translation of the *Bagh-o Bahar* – a product of Fort William College at Calcutta from the early nineteenth century with an English vocabulary by Duncan Forbes – was used by Rosen to study Hindustani. A copy of the *Bagh-o Bahar* with an Arabic lettered bookplate, reading Suleiman Rosen, and stuffed with his handwritten Hindustani-English-German vocabulary lists, made it back with him to Germany. The *Gulistan*, Rosen observed accurately, was widely used for children's education across northern India and was taught to the offspring of the deposed king of Awadh, Wajid 'Ali Shah.⁵⁹

Although Dufferin initially found Persian literature to “consist of improper and pessimistic poems” and thought both *Bagh-o Bahar* and the *Gulistan* “intolerably dull” he made progress in Rosen's company. Nicolson in Tehran, barely mastering 1,000 Persian words, soon expressed his jealousy of Dufferin's knowledge of 8,000 words.⁶⁰ Dufferin and Nicolson did not grasp much of what they were reading, venting their “disgust at the *Gulistan*, and at the crabbed cypher in which these foolish Orientals write.”⁶¹ Despite these outbursts of jingoist frustration, Dufferin's were not persistent. As his foreign secretary Henry Mortimer Durand noted later, “the way he toiled at it was really astonishing, the more so that he had no ear for languages. I believe he went on working at Persian to the end of his life.”⁶² Learning Hindustani and even more so Persian was a thing to be done. It could even be pleasurable. The growing popularity of the *Ruba'iyat* (poetic epigrams in quatrain form) attributed to Omar Khayyam in the English translation of Edward FitzGerald motivated Dufferin to study the Persian original. Ap-

58 A widely read collection of German folk tales compiled by the brothers Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm in the early nineteenth century.

59 Friedrich Rosen, *Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar*, X; Llewellyn-Jones, *Last King*, 229–30; Duncan Forbes, ed., *Bāgh o Bahār; Consisting of Entertaining Tales in the Hindūstānī Language, by Mir Amman of Dihlī*, 4 (London: Wm. H. Allen, 1873); Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Arthur Nicolson, 14 June 1886, F130–23, BL EM – Dufferin Collection; Amanda Lanzillo, “The Politics of Persian Language Education in Colonial India,” *Ajam Media Collective*, 31 January 2018. <https://ajammc.com/2018/01/31/late-indo-persian/>.

60 Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Arthur Nicolson, 16 September 1886, F130–23, BL EM – Dufferin Collection.

61 Arthur Nicolson to Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, 10 June 1886, F130–26, BL EM – Dufferin Collection.

62 Alfred Lyall, *The Life of the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava* (London: John Murray, 1905), 317.

parently incapable of mastering the “infernal” Arabic script, Dufferin went about producing a transliteration of 110 of the quatrains in the Latin alphabet, publishing it in Shimla in 1887. The escapist notions of Epicureanism, *carpe diem* and witty scepticism of the *Ruba'iyat* in Fitzgerald's rendering culturally compensated imperial actors, who saw themselves cut off from the in their view properly civilised centres of Europe. The *Ruba'iyat* were another passion that Rosen and Dufferin relished together, with Rosen later noting that Omar Khayyam's poetry was even studied in remote Indian mountain outposts.⁶³ For Dufferin and Rosen the *Ruba'iyat* became a gateway to Persian poetry and culture.

A good pastime at the idle viceregal court, mastering Persian and Hindustani provided intellectual stimulus and allowed for easier interaction with local staff. Moreover, Dufferin was conscious of the positive impression he left on the studied Indian elites, when he spoke in Persian. “Persian is not only spoken at all the courts of India, but it is to a certain extent the official language of the Indian Foreign Office in its dealings with the native Princes”, Rosen observed.⁶⁴ In the autumn of 1886, Dufferin was asked to hold a speech on a literary theme at the opening of the Punjab Chiefs' College in Lahore (Aitchinson College). Lieutenant governor Aitchinson assured Dufferin that the senate of the college would “take it as a compliment” and that he would be “enthusiastically received” if he spoke in Persian.⁶⁵ At a reception of the Persian consul-general in Bombay in the fall of 1887 Dufferin gave another – ghost-written – speech in Persian.⁶⁶ Shah Begum Jehan of Bhopal, who to the chagrin of the British government tolerated the growing influence of Wahabi sects and anti-British agitation in her realm, expressed in a letter to Lord Dufferin the hope to “have best opportunity at any time of speaking with your Excellency in that language.”⁶⁷ The maharajah of Varanasi supplied Persian books on the last independent nawabs of Bengal, the battle of Plassey of 1757 and the conquest of Bengal to Lord Dufferin and re-

⁶³ Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Arthur Nicolson, 16 September 1886, F130–23, BL EM – Dufferin Collection; Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, *Rubā'iyāt of Omar Khayyam* (Shimla: Self-Published, 1887); Friedrich Rosen, *Die Sinnsprüche Omars des Zeltmachers. Rubaiyat-i-Omar-i-Khajjam* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1909), 10.

⁶⁴ Friedrich Rosen, *Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar*, X; Lanzillo, “Politics of Persian Language Education in Colonial India.”

⁶⁵ C. U. Aitchinson to Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, 12 October 1886, 37, F130–42f, BL EM – Dufferin Collection.

⁶⁶ Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Friedrich Rosen, 7 October 1887, F130–26, BL EM – Dufferin Collection.

⁶⁷ Shah Begum of Bhopal Jehan to Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, 1 February 1887, 1, F130–44b, BL EM – Dufferin Collection; Berge, *Verschwundene Länder*, 78–79.

ceived books from the viceregal collection in return.⁶⁸ Knowledge of Persian and Hindustani also aided the imperial mission of uplifting the “natives” through culture, education and health care improvements. Conversing in Hindustani with village women, Lady Dufferin hoped, would make the establishment of her National Association for Supplying Female Medical Aid to the Women of India easier and more successful.⁶⁹ During their reign in India, the Dufferins were set on calming the socio-political situation. Showing an appreciation of the Indian languages, Persian and Hindustani helped them strike amicable bonds with local power holders – a cheaper and seemlier alternative to more forceful imperial measures.

Separated by country, social class and age, Dufferin and Rosen found common purpose in the pursuit of Persian. Dufferin continued studying Persian with Rosen’s Persian self-study book during his next ambassadorial posts in Rome and Paris, where he “learned by heart 786 columns of Persian dictionary, comprising about 16,000 words”. When in doubt he wrote Rosen to inquire the correct meaning of words, diligently reporting on his progress until his death in 1902.⁷⁰ Conversely, Rosen was overwhelmed with gratitude to the Dufferins. Shortly after his return to Detmold in September 1887, he wrote Lord Dufferin of his “most pleasant recollections” of their household and that his time in India had “enriched me by a number of experiences which I could not have acquired elsewhere... in so short a time, and has made me acquainted with two languages, the charm of which wholly [no one] can so well appreciate as your Excellency.”⁷¹

5 Genesis of a Research Project

Rosen never wrote explicitly about India’s political situation in the 1880s. In his English memoirs he merely noted on his year and a half in the sub-continent that he “enjoyed the best opportunities of studying British rule over the vast In-

68 Ishwari Prasad Narayan Singh to Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, 8 May 1886, 11, Vol 104 Neg 4330, BL IOR.

69 Roberts, “‘Merely Birds of Passage’.”

70 Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Friedrich Rosen, 14 February 1891, Dufferin, ASWPC; Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Friedrich Rosen, 3 October 1895, Dufferin, ASWPC; Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Friedrich Rosen, 14 March 1898, Dufferin, ASWPC; Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Friedrich Rosen, 1890s, Dufferin, ASWPC.

71 Friedrich Rosen to Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, 6 September 1887, 19, Vol 108 Neg 4332, BL IOR.

dian Empire and at the same time I had got into closer touch with the ideas of the natives of India".⁷² The annexation of Burma, financial constraints on the British Indian administration, the fear of Russian advances from the north, organising the transport of an Indian elephant to Persia as a gift for the Shah, the formation of the Indian National Congress and the push-back against the Illbert Bill by British Indians, the role of the press and the continuing development of India's railway system on the sub-continent and towards Central Asia were the order of the day. In some capacity Rosen would have been privy to these matters at the viceregal court. The two articles he wrote for the *Frankfurter Zeitung* during his time in India and the essays he published upon his return largely stuck to cultural, social and economic themes.⁷³ Read through a political prism, they showed Rosen's mixed feelings. He was enthusiastic about the technical mastery of the Indian railway, felt repelled by the caste system, and thought German merchants could benefit from accessing the vast Indian market. Coming into contact with Indian intellectuals, reading local newspapers and learning more about the lives of people from different religious, social and ethnic backgrounds, he feared that the onset of the "all-levelling" European machinery was bound to destroy what he saw as an authentic, valuable and colourful Indian culture.⁷⁴

Ostensibly not concerned with any of these socio-economic developments that the British Empire in India shaped, his doctoral dissertation on a popular modern Hindustani theatre play brought all of these contrary elements together in a by necessity muted affirmation of contemporary Indian culture and critique of British empire and European expansion. Hindustani drama was largely unrecognised in Europe at that point. The Arabist Otto Loth at Leipzig offered seminars on Hindustani grammar that drew on Garcin de Tassy's work on Hindustani literature, but Tassy's long-time standard work was weak on Awadhi arts and largely ignored theatre. Rosen's paths may have crossed with Sylvain Lévi in the early 1880s when they had both studied at the *École Pratique des Hautes Études* in

⁷² Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 81.

⁷³ Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Arthur Nicolson, 14 August 1886, F130–23, BL EM – Dufferin Collection; Arthur Nicolson to Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, 18 April 1887, BL EM – Dufferin Collection; Arthur Nicolson to Frederick Dufferin, 1 April 1887, F130–27, BL EM – Dufferin Collection; Harold Nicolson, *Sir Arthur Nicolson, Bart. First Lord Carnock. A Study in the Old Diplomacy* (London: Constable & Co, 1930), 59; Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 46; John Pendes to Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, 18 November 1885, 276, Vol. 38 Neg 4361, BL IOR; Friedrich Rosen, "Himalaya-Gebirge"; Friedrich Rosen, "Indiens Handelsverbindungen mit Zentral-Asien." *EXPORT, Organ des Centralvereins für Handelsgeographie* 11, no. 9 (1889): 132.

⁷⁴ Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*.

Paris, but Lévi's 1890 dissertation *Le Théâtre Indien* focussed on ancient theatre in Sanskrit and was entirely dismissive of modern Indian theatre.⁷⁵

Rosen's first exposure to the world of "modern Indian drama" came a day after his arrival in Calcutta on 7 January 1886, when the Dufferins visited the gardens of Wajid 'Ali Shah in Calcutta. Wajid 'Ali Shah had been the last semi-autonomous king in India, ruling the Kingdom of Awadh in its capital at Lucknow until the British forced his abdication and exiled him to Calcutta in 1856. At Calcutta he built gardens, palaces and religious shrines, seeking to create a "little Lucknow" that brought his former capital's splendours to Bengal. It soon became a "cultural hub" of Calcutta.⁷⁶ Lady Dufferin's elaborate description of the visit, the 25,000 pigeons and the several hundred wives Wajid 'Ali Shah kept and her outraged characterisation of him as "utterly devoid of every moral sense", who never did "any good to anybody", was typical for European views of the last Indian king. Lady Dufferin also had private cause to dislike him: unlike many other Indian former rulers and notables he never donated to her medical fund.⁷⁷

Donating to social and artistic causes of Indian Calcutta society at the time were the theatre enthusiast Jatindramohan Tagore and his brother the musicologist Sourindro Mohun Tagore.⁷⁸ Through his interaction with the Tagores, visiting theatre performances in Calcutta and leafing through bookstores, Rosen learned more about Indian theatre forms and productions than what he could absorb during a hurried visit of Wajid 'Ali Shah's palaces. Figuring out that the most prominent theatre production across India at the time was a Hindustani play from Lucknow by the name of *Indar Sabha* was no extraordinary feat. In the

75 Lehrstuhl für Neuere und Neueste Geschichte. Historisches Seminar der Universität Leipzig, ed., "Otto Loth," in *Professorenkatalog der Universität Leipzig / Catalogus Professorum Lipsiensium*. http://www.uni-leipzig.de/unigeschichte/professorenkatalog/leipzig/Loth_1375; Verzeichnis der als gehört bescheinigten Vorlesungen. Eintrag Friedrich Rosen. 1878, No. 506, Rep B 058. UAL; Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 8; Garcin de Tassy, *Histoire de la littérature Hindoui et Hindoustani. Biographie et bibliographie* (Paris: Oriental Translation Committee of Great Britain and Ireland, 1839); Garcin de Tassy, *Histoire de la littérature Hindoui et Hindoustani. Extraits et analyses* (Paris: Oriental Translation Committee of Great Britain and Ireland, 1847), 371–78; Garcin de Tassy, *La langue et la littérature Hindoustanies en 1874. Revue Anuelle* (Paris: Librairie Orientale de Maisonneuve, 1875), 49–50; Lévi, *Théâtre indien*, 405–6; Auguste Barth, "Bulletin des religions de l'Inde," *Revue de l'Histoire Des Religions* 15, no. 29 (1894): 44.

76 Sudipta Mitra, *Pearl by the River. Nawab Wajid Ali Shah's Kingdom in Exile* (Delhi: Rupa, 2017), 88–89, 97.

77 Hariot Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, *Our Viceregal Life*, vol. 1, 282; Friedrich Rosen, "Kastenwesen," 185; Richard David Williams, "Hindustani Music Between Awadh and Bengal, c.1758–1905" (PhD diss., King's College, 2014), 87–91; Tassy, *Langue et littérature Hindoustanies*, 50.

78 Friedrich Rosen, "Kastenwesen," 185.

1880s the *Indar Sabha* was a central part of the repertoires performed by Bombay's travelling Parsi theatrical companies all over India, with many other productions sampling its staging, music, songs and storyline.⁷⁹ It became so influential that some dramatic companies performed portions of it before the main item in order to entice spectators, and Rosen found that any theatre play could be described colloquially as an *Indar Sabha*.⁸⁰ Although British Indian observers "all untrained in the mysteries of Eastern harmony", like John Campbell Oman in Lahore, found that the "acting and singing in 'Indur Sabha' was dull and stately, without animation, action, or expression", it was "a very popular modern drama" that "unquestionably suited the taste of the [native] audience."⁸¹ Its popularity transcended cultures, religions and languages, with even the Bagdadi Jewish community in Calcutta transliterating its Hindustani text into Hebrew letters for community performances.⁸² Rosen recounted that the *Indar Sabha* was staged every Saturday in Urdu theatres by Parsis, and that while Calcutta had only one Urdu theatre, Bombay had several and the play enjoyed success in all cities around the subcontinent.⁸³ Leaving the strictures of the viceregal court and seeking out what he saw as an authentic Indian artistic scene, Rosen came across a wildly popular and modern theatre play that was beyond reach for European scholars and British imperial figures alike.

Drawing on the linguistic tool-set honed in Jerusalem, with his father at home in Detmold and at the philology faculties of Europe's universities, he tried to understand the *Indar Sabha* in cultural and social context. A bookseller in Calcutta kept Rosen abreast of recent publications of the *Indar Sabha*, over the weeks and months supplying Rosen with a comprehensive list of publications, republications and adaptations of the play.⁸⁴ Supplementary to his own "ethnographical" studies in India, his research was framed by a wider reading. Other sources were recent publications by Indian scholars, such as Muhammad Hussein Azad's "crucial canon-forming" *Ab-e Hayat* and Nishikanta Chattopadhyaya's *The Yâtrâs; or, the popular dramas of Bengal* – though Rosen conceived of Chattopadhyaya as a scholar from Leipzig university rather than primarily as

⁷⁹ Gupt, *The Parsi Theatre*.

⁸⁰ Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 7.

⁸¹ Oman, *Indian Life*, 188–93.

⁸² Walter J. Fischel, "The Literary Activities of the Arabic-Speaking Jews in India," *Jewish Book Annual* 30 (1972/1973 (5733)): 25–26.

⁸³ Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 6–7.

⁸⁴ Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 19–21, 28–29; Friedrich Rosen, list of publications published in Indian languages in 1877 and 1882, July 1886 ASWPC.

Indian.⁸⁵ In a list Rosen compiled the increasing number of publications published in Indian languages across various fictional genres and academic disciplines that evaded the reach of the British administration, commenting in the margins that “very many books, particularly brochures, are hardly controllable”.⁸⁶

English-language local newspapers and directories like the *Imperial Gazetteer of India* equally contributed to his understanding of Indian literature and theatre. Another body of resources Rosen drew on were Urdu grammars, dictionaries, vocabularies and other books that were published to render the language accessible for British administrative purposes. At the time the British supported Urdu as a unifying administrative and cultural language for all of India.⁸⁷ Many of these publications were coming out of the scholarship of Fort William College, a fifteen-minute horse trot from the viceregal residence in Calcutta, and Rosen stocked up on British Indian books on language, culture and history for his library back in Germany.⁸⁸ After Rosen had parted ways with the Dufferins and was on his way back to Europe an encounter in Lahore with his “friend” Muhammed Sadruddin Khan, a British Indian civil servant, provided him with “many valuable insights into nature and character of the poetry of his homeland” and with further copies of the *Indar Sabha* in circulation in the Punjab.⁸⁹

Rosen was fascinated. He had stumbled upon a rich, among Europeans under-explored, developing and easily accessible research field that presented him with an opportunity to move back into Orientalist scholarship. Witnessing

85 Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 2–8; Nisikānta Chattopādhyāya, *The Yātrās; or, the Popular Dramas of Bengal* (London: Trübner, 1882); Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 10 September 1890, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Muhammad Husain Azad, “Excerpts from *Ab-e Hayat*,” trans. Frances W. Pritchett, *Annual of Urdu Studies* 13 (1998): 55–79.

86 Friedrich Rosen, list of publications published in Indian languages in 1877 and 1882, July 1886 ASWPC.

87 Annemarie Schimmel, *German Contributions to the Study of Pakistani Linguistics* (Hamburg: German-Pakistan Forum, 1981), 7; Frances W. Pritchett, “A Long History of Urdu Literature Culture, Part 2: Histories, Performances, and Masters,” in *Literary Cultures in History. Reconstructions from South Asia*, Sheldon Pollock (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003) 879–91; Sisir Kumar Das, *A History of Indian Literature 1800–1910. Western Impact: Indian Response* (Delhi: South Asia Books, 1991), 379; William Wilson Hunter, *The Imperial Gazetteer of India* (London: Trübner, 1886); Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 29; Friedrich Rosen to Eduard Sachau, 8 August 1887, SOS, Rep. 208 A Nr 78, GStPK.

88 Friedrich Rosen to Eduard Sachau, 18 August 1887, SOS, Rep. 208 A Nr 78, GStPK; Alison Sadafi, “The Fictional ‘Fallout’ from Fort William?” *Annual of Urdu Studies* 28 (2013): 38.

89 Sadar Wasiram Singh to Friedrich Rosen, 20 July 1887, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen to Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, 7 April 1887, 173, Vol 107 Neg 4331, BL IOR; Sadar Wasiram Singh to Friedrich Rosen, 16 August 1895, ASWPC.

up close the impact in India of forces associated with Europe and its culture – fast-spreading railway systems, global commodity trade, urbanisation and the accelerating dissemination of printing-press ideas and styles – Rosen was under the impression that the original India he still saw would perish, and with it the cultural plurality he found encapsulated in the *Indar Sabha*.⁹⁰ In contrast the “interesting culture development” of modern Urdu drama, the “idiosyncratic” characteristics of Indian poetry, music and performances all made for intellectually stimulating research and conveyed an original India that developed new art on its own accord.⁹¹ On the surface inconspicuous, in pursuing research on Indian theatre Rosen plunged into the political depths of Indian culture and society. When he visited Lucknow in the fall of 1886 with the Dufferins, he took off to explore the city and the province of Awadh to find out more about this famous all-Indian theatre play, its sites of genesis and its author Amanat.⁹²

6 Mutations of Awadh

Thirty years after the British annexation of Awadh, Rosen arrived to a city drastically altered in character from the times of the rule of Wajid ‘Ali Shah and his predecessors, the nawabs of Awadh. After Wajid ‘Ali Shah’s expulsion in 1856, the Indian Rebellion came to a head in Lucknow in 1857, where Indians serving in the British military had mutinied and laid siege on the British residency in the city. From the residency the British representatives had for decades exerted influence on the nawabs of Awadh, hollowing out their control of Awadh from the inside. The siege on the residency became a traumatic experience for the British Empire. British forces, administrators and their families together with loyal Indians, some 7,000 people all together, held out under sniper fire for three months without assistance. When the siege was completely broken and Lucknow recaptured by the British after nine months, two thirds of the British community in the residency were dead. The notion that British women would have been exposed to sexual violence galvanised the British public. “Nothing infuriated the Victorians

⁹⁰ Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Geschichte der Eisenbahnreise. Zur Industrialisierung von Raum und Zeit Im 19. Jahrhundert*, (Frankfurt: Fischer, 2015), 17–41.

⁹¹ Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, IV.

⁹² Awadh and Agra had been united into an administrative unit as the North-Western Provinces in 1877. Rosen used two large Hindustani language maps of Awadh to get around. Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, *Our Viceregal Life*, vol. 2, 59–60; نقشه اوده “Map of Oudh,” Indien, ASWPC; نقشه اوده “Map of Oudh. Large,” Indien, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 1, 9, 20; Terence John Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Friedrich Rosen, 15 February 1891, ASWPC.

more than the thought of white women at the mercy of mutinous Indians”, and despite the loyal support of 3,500 Indian soldiers the “British at home nevertheless insisted on regarding the Mutiny as a revolt of black against white”, and the Evangelical Christian movement advocated raising the sword against Hindus and Muslims in their thousands. The British garrison of Lucknow became heroes of British empire as they

dug in at the British Residency, held out defiantly and it was the siege of Lucknow that became the Mutiny’s most celebrated episode... the ruined, bullet-riddled Residency itself that became the Mutiny’s most poignant memorial. The Union Jack that flew here during the siege was not subsequently lowered until Independence in 1947.⁹³

Under Colonel Robert Napier, who had seen action in Lucknow as part of British relief forces, the former capital was rapidly remodelled for control purposes. “With surgical exactitude” Napier had two fifths of the city knocked down, seven axes hewn through the dense city to guarantee military access, tearing down gardens for esplanades and destroying most palaces. A large part of the notable population was expelled to sever the bonds between the former rulers and the remaining Indian population. To prevent future insurgency, the British “deeply change[d] the physical layout, ethos and culture of this once rich and proud court city.”⁹⁴ In line with European sanitary precepts of the day – the now long obsolete miasmatic theory of disease – a new city arose with wide spaces for air circulation, a botanical garden, churches, statues of Queen Victoria and a museum that displayed “the curiosities collected by the nawabs”. The Hazrat Ganj neighbourhood on the East of city was redeveloped as a shopping district for the colonial city and to replace the former bazaar-centred city and the palaces of the rulers of Awadh further west. The British cultivated a local Indian elite class as intermediaries for local control and “it became quite possible and desirable for Lakhnawis to venture to imitate a version of the English middle class way of life as it quickly became apparent to the surviving indigenous elite that status symbols lay in judicious acculturation.” In addition, the languages of the city changed with English added to the mix of Urdu and Hindi. Especially discriminative against Muslim Indians, as Oldenburg observes, colonial life with its new manners, such as “cricket games, horse racing, card games, billiards – and garden parties and ball room dancing... slowly nudged the Indo-Perisian into the background of the urban stage”.⁹⁵

⁹³ Ferguson, *Empire*, 148–51.

⁹⁴ Ferguson, *Empire*, 180; Oldenburg, *Colonial Lucknow*, vii–viii.

⁹⁵ Oldenburg, *Colonial Lucknow*, x–xiii, 210.

Keene's 1875 *Hand-book for Travellers to Lucknow*, which Rosen likely consulted on account of the popularity of Keene's travel guides in India at the time, mirrored the British imperial view on the city in noting that of "the European part nothing but praise is to be spoken" and that the shops in Hazrat Ganj were

unusually handsome... For the intelligent traveller however – especially of British blood – the main interest of Lucknow must ever be derived from the history of the heroes of Fifty-seven whose remains lie buried there, and of their no less gallant comrades. As Cawnpore is the saddest memorial of British India, so is Lucknow her most glorious.

But despite viewing the city entirely through the lens of "Fifty-seven", Keene could not but recognise that "Lucknow deserves the title of a 'City of Palaces'".⁹⁶ Most of the remaining palaces had been repurposed for British administrative and military needs. Echoing Keene from the position of the vanquished, the Lucknow resident Mookherji's *Pictorial Lucknow* noted that the city "has lost much of its former splendour and glory; yet it is still a very interesting city to visitors from distant countries, not only for its palaces and magnificent ruins, and its picturesque people, but for the notoriety it acquired during the terrible days of 1857 and 1858". Writing a few years before Rosen visited the city, Mookherji found that "the spirit of vandalism is not yet extinct" and that it was

a matter of deep regret to see how the city is throwing off its skin; and its arts and manufactures, its old picturesqueness, and its peculiar civilization, for which Lucknow was famous, are dying an unnatural death.

But the people in Awadh still had "fondest memories" of Wajid 'Ali Shah and the cultural life around him.⁹⁷ With theatre and satire heavily censored by the British, only the occasional musical soiree in Lucknow's chowk (old city) carried over some of the nawabi cultural life into the new colonial era.⁹⁸ Thus, rather than following the beaten track of British colonial glory to the residency in 1886, Rosen went looking for what remained from Lucknow's bygone era in its old city, talking to booksellers and whoever could tell him something about what Lucknow had been like when the *Indar Sabha* was first written.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ Henry George Keene, *A Hand-Book for Visitors to Lucknow with Preliminary Notes on Allahabad and Cawnpore* (Calcutta: Thacker, Spink & Co, 1875), 76–77.

⁹⁷ Sharar, *Lucknow*, 47; Mookherji, *Pictorial Lucknow*, I, 38–42.

⁹⁸ Oldenburg, *Colonial Lucknow*, 224; Mookherji, *Pictorial Lucknow*, 188.

⁹⁹ Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 8–9.

Awadh had not been detached from the outside world before its incorporation into colonial India. In fact, the close relations it entertained with the British, other Europeans and people from the Middle East had been an important motor of its growth. Seeking to weaken the Mughals in Delhi, the British East India Company had from the 1770s lent its support to the nawabs of Awadh, who remained deputy governors of the province of the de jure Mughal sovereigns. The nawabs benefitted from the company's financial, military and technological means, allowing Awadh to expand its territory and flourish economically and culturally. In 1775 the nawabs moved Awadh's capital from Faizabad to Lucknow, setting in motion the construction of new bridges, palaces, gardens and religious sites befitting a new capital city.¹⁰⁰ Llewellyn-Jones observed that "the fame of the Oudh court rapidly spread beyond the boundaries of the sub-continent, drawing to its centre a motley and curious crowd of foreigners, European and Middle-Eastern, all of whom hoped to share in the new-found prosperity manifested in the brilliant, glittering city". Many of these foreigners were French and flocked to Awadh to join its army. Others were merchants or became attached to the court, like the Frenchman Claude Martin, who became a trusted confidant of the nawabs and influenced the tastes at court toward European architecture. Europeans like Martin did not keep a distance from the Indian population but were part of society. Without "appreciable colour prejudice" intermarriage with Muslim and Hindu Indians "was a normal feature of life" well into the nineteenth century. When Europeans came to India they learned Persian as a matter of course, many even writing poetry in Persian and Hindustani.¹⁰¹

A sense of innovation and *carpe diem* prevailed in Awadh as the nawabs lost more and more sovereignty while building a new, creative city. The *Calcutta Review* in 1845 hesitatingly noted its appeal:

There is a strange dash of European architecture among its Oriental buildings. Travellers have compared the place to Moscow and to Constantinople, and can easily fancy the resemblance. Gilded domes surmounted by the crescent; tall, slender columns; lofty arcades; houses that look as if they had been transplanted from Regent Street; iron railings and balustrades; cages some containing wild beasts, others strange bright birds; gardens, fountains, and cypress-trees; elephants, camels, and horses; gilt litters and English barouches; all these form a dazzling picture. We once observed at Lucknow a royal carriage drawn by eight elephants, and another with twelve horses. Yet, brilliant and picturesque Lucknow is,

¹⁰⁰ Sharar, *Lucknow*, 45; Keene, *Hand-Book Lucknow*, 63–68; Llewellyn-Jones, *Last King*, 277.

¹⁰¹ Llewellyn-Jones, *Fatal Friendship*, 15–33; Saksena, *European & Indo-European Poets of Urdu & Persian*.

still there is a puerility and want of stability about it, characteristic enough of its monarchs.¹⁰²

The nawabs sought to create their “own vision of a nineteenth century European city” but, as Llewellyn-Jones observes, “ironically their beautification of Lucknow... attracted some of the bitterest criticism from European commentators”.¹⁰³

European cultural influence was but one of many elements that contributed to making Awadh an originaive centre of culture.¹⁰⁴ The defeat of the Mughals at the battle of Delhi in 1757 against the Maratha empire and Delhi falling to the British East India Company in 1803 caused an exodus of the Mughal upper classes. Many artists, poets and artisans sought patronage at the remaining major Muslim courts in India at Hyderabad and at Lucknow, with the latter taking on the role of the “rightful successor of the Mughal legacy” for many.¹⁰⁵ Some 50,000 people were attached to the court of Awadh and Lucknow poets and artists strove “to create new styles and to try out new genres” as the rulers of Awadh patronaged the arts, staged festivities and constructed new palaces. Lucknow became “the last example of the old pomp and refinement of Hindustan, and the memento of earlier times.”¹⁰⁶

With the British noose tightening and the political impotence of the nawabs becoming ever clearer, “gaiety and merriment were the order of the day”. Wajid ‘Ali Shah’s reign from 1847 came at the end of the “fatal” relationship the nawabs entertained with the British. As heir apparent Wajid ‘Ali Shah had practiced a variety of poetical styles. Under the pen name Akhtar (star) he authored two masnavis (long narrative poems with rhyming couplets) that could be understood as romantic expressions of love for a person or in the spiritual meaning of the Sufis for the “absolute beauty”, the creator of the universe.¹⁰⁷ Other interests of Wajid ‘Ali Shah were dance, song and theatre. Dance and song performances of the North Indian nautanki style were usually carried out at court by female tawaifs (courtesans) of high social standing. Tawaifs were “top tax-paying citi-

102 *The Calcutta Review* (Calcutta: Sanders & Cones, 1845), 380–81.

103 Llewellyn-Jones, *Fatal Friendship*, xi.

104 Sharar and Qureshi minimised the European significance on Awadh’s cultural development and emphasised its Asian origins, while Saksena maintained that some exotic art was transplanted “on Urdu soil”. Williams, “Hindustani Music between Awadh and Bengal,” 96–107; Sharar, *Lucknow*, 47; M. Aslam Qureshi, *Theatrical Genius*, 40–55; Saksena, *Urdu Literature*, 346.

105 Taj, *Court of Indar*, 17; Llewellyn-Jones, *Last King*, 3.

106 Llewellyn-Jones, *Fatal Friendship*, 5, 12.

107 Sharar, *Lucknow*, 63–65; Llewellyn-Jones, *Last King*, 51.

zens” of Lucknow who “sang, danced and were the purveyors of all that was considered good taste and high fashion”.¹⁰⁸

Lucknow’s Shi’a Muslim rulers of Turkic-Persian origin absorbed the culture of the society they found in Awadh and developed it as a composite culture, writing new dramas based on such ancient Indian epics as *Ram Lila*, *Khrishna Lila* and *Shakuntala* and participating in local festivals like mela (a kind of carnival at the end of the harvest season). While the rulers of Awadh even adopted local Hindu symbols, like the in Lucknow omnipresent fish for beneficence, they kept their Muslim religion. Persianate-Islamic cultures had only minor theatrical traditions, but drama flourished in Awadh also due to Shi’a Muslim influences. Every year the martyrdom of Hussein on Ashura, the tenth day of muharram, was dramatically performed in Lucknow. Before the arrival of the Shi’a rulers such festivals of sorrow had been unknown to Indian society. Muharram intrigued the local population out of simple curiosity, but also because the rulers of Awadh developed it as a secular sorrow festival, allowing non-Muslims to enter mosques and imambaras (Shi’ite congregation halls) to see the performance of the ta’ziya (passion plays).¹⁰⁹ As was typical for Mughal rulers, the nawabs valued the religious heterogeneity of their subjects and fostered a cosmopolitan culture of adab “understood as both good manners and belles-lettres” that gave space to the practice and development of all religious traditions.¹¹⁰

When Wajid ‘Ali Shah became Awadh’s last king, he became a generous sponsor of both Shi’ite religious festivities and Krishna performances. The different poetical styles he had practiced, the song and dance performances of tawaifs he had patronaged, and his interest in the repertoire of Hindu wandering folk theatre groups all became sources of his own theatre making.¹¹¹ The first theatre play Wajid ‘Ali Shah wrote and staged in his palace was based on the well-known love story of Krishna and Radhain.¹¹² Setting the artistic trend, Wajid ‘Ali Shah constructed his Qaisarbagh palace to provide the amenities and space for his theatrical pursuits. Its opening created a theatrical boom in the city and a number of theatrical companies shot up that staged intricate and lav-

108 Shivani Bhasin, “‘Tawaifs’ of Awadh: The First Women of Hindi Cinema,” *The Hindu*, 24 August 2019.

109 Syed Ahmad Abbas Rudaulvi, Personal communication, 11 July 2018; Taj, *Court of Indar*, 22–23.

110 Most religious conflicts in Awadh arose between Shi’ite and Sunni Muslims when public debates got out of hand. Sharma, *Mughal Arcadia*, 2; Sharar, *Lucknow*, 95.

111 M. Aslam Qureshi, *Theatrical Genius*, 5; Llewellyn-Jones, *Last King*, 51.

112 Syed Masud Hasan Rizavi, “Urdu Drama Aur Stage,” *Indian Literature* 3, no. 1 (1959–60): 139.

ish productions.¹¹³ A 1851 performance of the Krishna story was staged in fourteen sessions intermitted by days of rest and took a total of forty days to complete. From inception to end lasting less than ten years, little material evidence remains of the theatre productions Wajid 'Ali Shah staged at Qaisarbagh and elsewhere around Lucknow, "apart from the fact that they cost a huge amount of money to stage and went on for a very long time. The majority were private events, to which only certain people were invited, like courtiers, ministers, relatives and the king's already numerous wives. British officials were not welcome, even if they had wanted to attend" as Llewellyn-Jones noted.

The dislike was mutual. Among many British visitors Wajid 'Ali Shah's palace was described "as degenerate, debased, full of 'execrable taste' and 'ridiculous absurdities' and demonstrating only a 'grotesque grace'."¹¹⁴ Qaisarbagh was too theatrical for their Victorian tastes. Tragically, having handed over almost all his political power, theatre was all that was left for the last ruler of Awadh. The "enforced political idleness of the nobility was one of the prime determinants of the cultural climate of Awadh. The more the British deprived the nawabs of the actual duties of ruling, the more the nawabs diverted their energies to pursuits which were, in British eyes, wasteful and frivolous excesses", in turn encouraging British annexation designs and providing fodder for claims of civilisational superiority.¹¹⁵

Although Wajid 'Ali Shah pioneered the new art of theatre in the Urdu language by creatively drawing together influences from Hinduism, Islam, the Persianate cultures and European theatre, the king's theatrical productions were not what became eponymous for theatre all across India by the time Rosen arrived some 30 years later. That honour fell to Amanat's *Indar Sabha*. Until the 1920s it was transmitted through oral lore that Amanat belonged to the numerous courtiers of Wajid 'Ali Shah and that the king had ordered the play from him.¹¹⁶ Taj's analysis that Amanat's work was in fact a subtle critique of the declining kingdom of Awadh under the pressure of British encroachment suggests that Amanat was not as closely tied to the court. Whatever was the case, Amanat produced a play very much inspired by the last years of the kingdom of Awadh and without Wajid 'Ali Shah's genre-making and cultivation of the novel art at his court, the poet Amanat would not have had the cultural and financial wherewithal to compose the *Indar Sabha*.

¹¹³ Sharar, *Lucknow*, 85.

¹¹⁴ Llewellyn-Jones, *Last King*, 51–56; M. Aslam Qureshi, *Theatrical Genius*, 9.

¹¹⁵ Taj, *Court of Indar*, 14; Llewellyn-Jones, *Last King*, 255–56.

¹¹⁶ M. Aslam Qureshi, *Theatrical Genius*, 40; Schimmel, *Urdu Literature to Iqbāl*, 214.

7 Amalgamations of Amanat and his *Indar Sabha*

Mirroring the sentiments of nineteenth century Europeans that accused the court of Awadh of debauchery and the *Indar Sabha* as representative of the demise of this “colourful glass house”, Schimmel’s description of the piece as glittering, escapist entertainment “certainly surpassing the limits of decency” and finding appeal among westerners who yearned for the “sensual exotic excitement” of “the ‘Oriental’ world of Lucknow” mostly betrayed her listless engagement with Lucknawi theatre and its protagonists.¹¹⁷ Understood in the cultural-political context of its genesis and as an artistic reflection of pre-rebellion Lucknow and the court of Wajid ‘Ali Shah, the personality and biography of the *Indar Sabha*’s author Agha Hasan Amanat illuminate how the amalgamations of Northern Indian cultures and religions fused into a modern theatrical development that would come to enjoy remarkable success across India.

Amanat’s son Latafat wrote a biography of his father in 1887, which Rosen reproduced in German translation.¹¹⁸ Amanat was born in Lucknow in 1816 to a Shi’ite Muslim family of Persian origin. Under the instruction of ‘Ashiq Shapir Mian Dilgir, a master of poet in Lucknow, Amanat started writing poems at an early age. Next to penning several salaams (religious greetings), he wrote marsiyas and a large collection of wasokht with Dilgir. The wasokht is a rare genre pioneered in Lucknow:

It consists of a special kind of *musadas*, a six-lined verse, of an erotic nature. The subject of these poems usually involves a lover who first proclaims his love, then gives a description of the beloved and her infidelities. After this the lover becomes offended and tells the beloved that he has become enamoured of some other charmer. He praises the beauty and fascination of this imaginary loved one, thus making his true love jealous, teasing and tormenting her until her pride is broken and there is a reconciliation.¹¹⁹

Not merely reflective of the eroticism in the city, that many Europeans decried as scandalous, the wasokht also spoke to the elevated role of the tawaifs at the court of Awadh, who, as Oldenburg found, brought “sexual freedom to the culture of Lucknow.”¹²⁰ Amanat’s other specialisation, the marsiya, was originally an elegiac poetic form used to commemorate the martyrdom of Hussein and Has-

¹¹⁷ Schimmel’s love for Urdu literature focussed on the great poets Ghalib, Mir Taqi Mir and Iqbal. The “light entertainment” of the “second rate” Amanat was too mundane. Schimmel, *Urdu Literature to Iqbāl*, 189–96, 213–14; Schimmel, *German Pakistani Linguistics*, 76–79.

¹¹⁸ Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 10–13.

¹¹⁹ Sharar, *Lucknow*, 85.

¹²⁰ Bhasin, “Tawaifs.”

san, which had all but disappeared from the Persian poetic repertoire with the decline of the Safavid Empire in the early eighteenth century. Adapted for themes other than mourning, such as descriptions of the weather or dramatic narration, they experienced a revival in northern India and were central to Lucknow's "cultural rise".¹²¹

After leaving his teacher, Amanat's interests turned to ghazals and thumris.¹²² When a stroke muted him, he perfected his poetic abilities in writing, and attracted a number of students. Representative of the strong ties the Muslim gentry around Lucknow's court cultivated with the Shi'ite shrines in Iraq, in 1844 Amanat went on a lengthy pilgrimage via Iran to Kerbala. At Hussein's shrine in Kerbala his ability to speak was restored.¹²³ Upon his return to Lucknow in 1847, Amanat established a poetic society. Coinciding with Wajid 'Ali Shah's ascent to the throne around the same time, Amanat's friends urged him to compose the Vedic story of Indra in such a way that it would consist of ghazals, masnawis, prose, thumris, holi, vāsanta and rain songs. A pious Shi'ite Muslim, the artistic elements involved in writing this piece were according to Latafat distasteful to Amanat. Thus, he adopted the name of ustad (master) as his nom de plume. Only for some of his most skillful ghazals is his usual artist's name Amanat indicated. Amanat started working on the *Indar Sabha* in 1849 and it was first published in Lucknow in 1853/4 (1270 AH). His further oeuvre contained more poems in various styles, which he collected in *Guldasta-e Amanat* (1853).¹²⁴ Two years after Wajid 'Ali Shah's abdication and just as the old fabric of Awadh was torn down by the British, Amanat died in Lucknow in 1858 at the age of 42.¹²⁵

His style was in Taj's words "characterized by puns, creative use of homonyms, alliteration, assonance, and lexical resonances of all kinds. His unusual vocabulary is primarily Persian in derivations, but he has a solid knowledge of Arabic, and in his folk songs, he uses many indigenous terms and grammatical

121 Rudaulvi, Personal communication; Sharar, *Lucknow*, 83.

122 Ghazals are short lyric poems central to Persian love poetry. A thumri is a semi-classical form of music composition with influences of classical and folk music and emotional and erotic subtones intended for interpretative dance. Texts were usually inspired by romantic and devotional Hindu literature Ehsan Yarshater, "Ghazal II. Characteristics and Conventions," in *Encyclopædia Iranica* (2006). <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/ghazal-2>; Peter Manuel, *Thumri in Historical and Stylistic Perspectives* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1989), 38.

123 Meir Litvak, "Money, Religion, and Politics: The Oudh Bequest in Najaf and Karbala', 1850 – 1903," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 33 (2001): 1–2; Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 11; Llewellyn-Jones, *Last King*, 67.

124 Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 12–13, 28.

125 Oldenburg, *Colonial Lucknow*, vii–xxvi.

structures characteristic of village life and speech.”¹²⁶ Viewed through the prism of philology, the *Indar Sabha* made for a fascinating contemporary piece of interlacing languages and styles and Rosen was drawn in by the endurance and the expansion of the appeal Amanat’s theatrical masterpiece enjoyed across the sub-continent after the British annexation of Awadh. The amalgamation of styles, languages and cultures Amanat brought to bear reflected a modern Indian cultural landscape Rosen had not seen portrayed in Europe.

What was this chief labour of Amanat, the *Indar Sabha*? The main characters of the play are Raja Indar, the king of a magical realm, four colourful *paris* (fairies) of which Sabz Pari (green fairy) is the heroine of the drama, Kala Dev and Lal Dev (a black and a red demon), and prince Gulfam of Akhtarnagar, the only human in the play.¹²⁷ The title of the play takes its name from King Indar and his *sabha* (court/assembly). The piece starts with a song and *jalsa* (dance) cycle at Indar’s court, in which the three fairies Pukhraj Pari, Lal Pari, and Nilam Pari perform songs one after the other. These song cycles include a number of Hindi songs, such as the *vasanta* (praising spring), *holi* (a popular genre of folk songs) and *sawan* (a song about the raining season), alongside Persian/Urdu *ghazals* and North Indian *thumris*.

The fourth cycle of Sabz Pari does not take place, as the Raja has now fallen asleep, setting off the development of the dramatic plot. Sabz Pari, upset by the unheeding Raja, leaves the hall and enters the garden, where she orders Kala Dev to bring her prince Gulfam. She had fallen in love with the prince when she saw him asleep on the roof of a palace in Akhtarnagar during her flight to the performance at Indar’s court. She tells Kala Dev that she had showered Gulfam with kisses and put an emerald-green ring on his finger before leaving him. The demon identifies the human prince by the ring and delivers him to Sabz Pari. She awakens the prince, who is unsettled to find himself in an unfamiliar place and at the side of an unknown fairy. Sabz Pari’s attempts to soothe him and make him fall in love with her fail, but when Gulfam learns that Sabz Pari has access to the court of Indar he promises his love if she shows him the court. Sabz Pari knows that the heavenly court of Raja Indar is off-limits to humans, but her attempts at dissuasion are fruitless and she brings Gulfam to the garden of Raja Indar. While she then continues singing for the divine king, the other

¹²⁶ Taj, *Court of Indar*, 68–69.

¹²⁷ Akhtarnagar is in reference to Akhtar’s (Wajid ‘Ali Shah) palaces in Lucknow. Schimmel noted on north Indian colour symbolism that “Green is the colour of life giving, resurrection and paradise.” Annemarie Schimmel and M. Ikram Chaghatai, eds., *Rhine to Indus. Collection of A. Schimmel’s Rare Writings* (Lahore: Pakistan Writers Cooperative Society, 2012), 375–77; Taj, *Court of Indar*, 85.

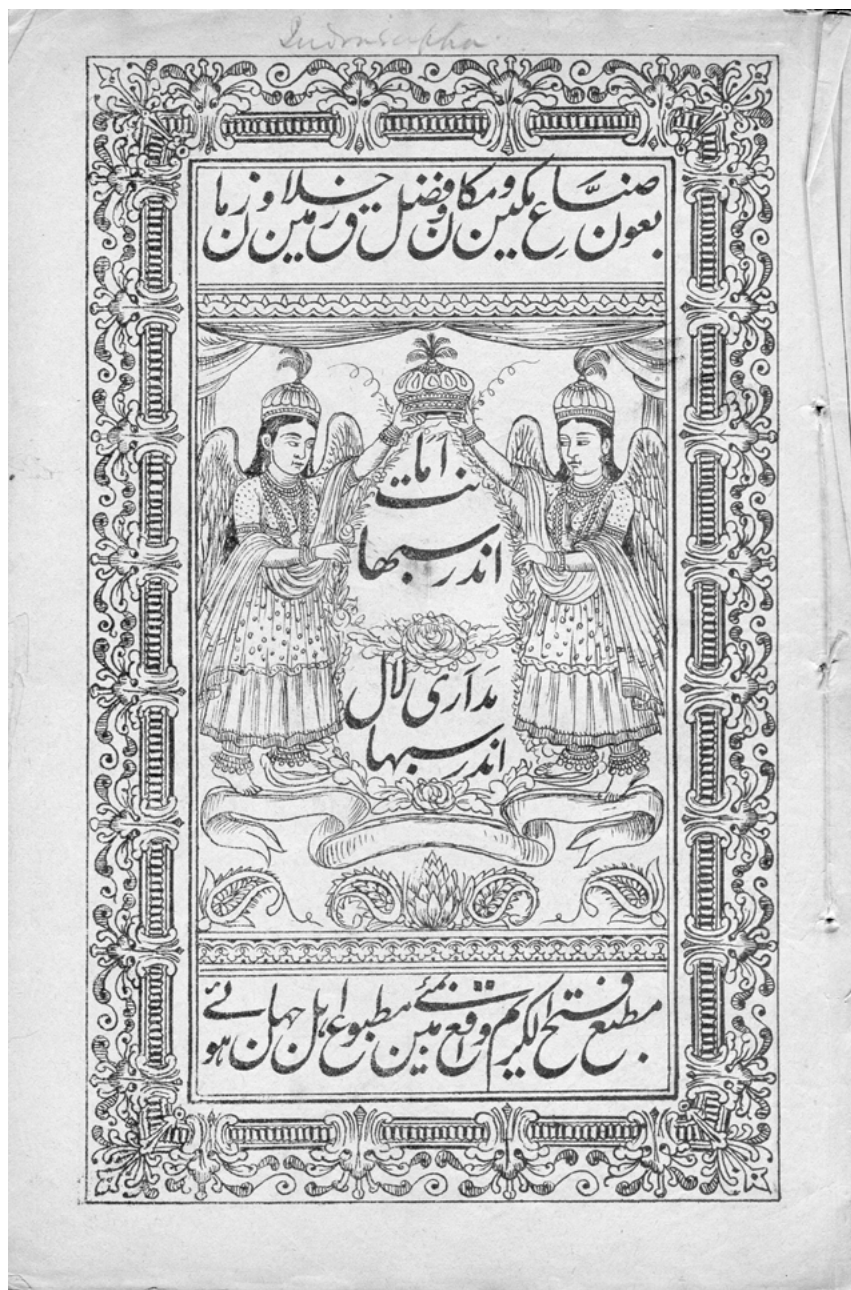


Fig. 2.2. Rosen's copy of Agha Hasan Amanat's *Indar Sabha*.

demon, Lal Dev, discovers Gulfam in the garden, and drags him before Raja Indar. Sabz Pari confesses to having brought the human into the heavenly sphere. Outraged, Indar orders Gulfam to be imprisoned in a well at the mountain Qaf (a mythical mountain in the Caucasus), while Sabz Pari loses her wings and is expelled from the fairyland.

While there were no acts in the original edition, later editions divided the play into two acts. Sabz Pari's expulsion from the celestial sphere marks the end of act one. Act two begins with Sabz Pari wandering the lands as a jogan (renunciant) and singing her songs. She wears a yellow-red dress, ash in her face and wild hair. Kala Dev, the black demon loyal to her, finds her thus and is attracted by her beautiful chant, but does not recognise the fallen fairy. The demon convinces Raja Indar to hear her sing. Indar is so moved by the songs of Sabz Pari that he offers her an areca nut, which turns the mouth red when eating. She refuses, explaining that the longing for her lover has already brought her heart-blood to her lips. After another song, she is offered a garland. This she also refuses, as she only hopes for her lover to enclose her neck. After a third song, Indar offers her a shawl, which Sabz Pari rejects again, as the fever of her love keeps her warm. She then asks the Raja if he will grant her a wish. When he agrees, she asks that Gulfam be freed from the well and be reunited with her. Taken aback but bound by his promise, Raja Indar sends Lal Dev, the red demon, to free and bring back Gulfam. The prince and the fairy are reunited, while the other fairies join into a celebratory chorus.

The tones of the plot are love, flirtation, anger, joy and sadness, culminating in a happy ending. The comedy, to categorise it as such, is heavily front-loaded, with the development of the plot only starting halfway through the play.¹²⁸ The characters are a "blend of Indian and Persian elements" with Indar and his court originating in Hindu mythology, but mixed with features of Persian fairylands reflected in the characters of the four paris. The demons are also of Persian origin but find parallels in Hindu lore. Raja Indar is adapted to the figure of Wajid 'Ali Shah. While Taj emphasises that the combination of Hindu-Indian and Persian-Islamic elements are combined in a "hybrid" nature of the play, Rosen saw Indar as a predominantly Indian figure and the demons and fairies as mostly Persian in nature. Indar's anger against Gulfam, however, Rosen understood as an Islamic theme, drawing the parallel of the prince peeking at the Raja's fairies to gaining entrance to a haram or women in purdah.¹²⁹ The love of a fairy to a

¹²⁸ Taj, *Court of Indar*, 108.

¹²⁹ Indra is usually not depicted as angry in Hindu tradition. Rudaulvi, Personal communication.

human prince and the yogan passage are Indian tropes for Rosen, as are the elements of offering areca nut and the songs about the seasons in the beginning.¹³⁰

Representative of composite culture of northern India, the “amalgam of Persian and Indian elements” in the *Indar Sabha* – characterised as bizarre by Lévi – goes beyond drawing on symbolism and narratives from Persianate-Islamicate and Hindu-Indic canons.¹³¹ The linguistic structure of the play also reflects the Gangna jamni (two river) civilisation, as it is locally known, in weaving together language components of Persian, Urdu and Hindi.¹³² Prosaic elements originating in Persian and further developed and cultivated in Urdu, such as ghazals, thumris, dastan (narratives) and masnavis, were blended with lyrical elements from Hindi religious and folk songs. A further dimension to this weaving is the parallel employment of Persian and Hindustani in the thenth (unmixed) dialect spoken in the countryside of Awadh and in the form of the rekhti (mixed) dialect of the city, which integrated more words, intonations and grammar from the Persian language spoken at the court. The rekhti again comes in two variants – male language for public affairs and female language for family life and although for some time “considered immodest and uncultured by people of polite society” Amanat’s play wove together these different voices.¹³³ Indicative of the further development the play experienced as it spread across the subcontinent, the first edition of the *Indar Sabha* was still more strongly dominated by Persian language elements, while subsequent editions in the second half of the nineteenth century took in more Indian elements lost some of the Persian.¹³⁴ Further Indian elements in the *Indar Sabha* are its performative aspects such as the inclusion of north Indian folk theatre practices like swang and nautanki, as well as Hindu devotional theatre.¹³⁵

130 Sharar confirms Rosen’s description of the areca nut being used as an offering in Indian tradition in Awadh. Taj, *Court of Indar*, 89; Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 18; Sharar, *Lucknow*, 219.

131 Lévi, *Théâtre indien*, 405.

132 Taj, *Court of Indar*, 129–66.

133 Sharar, *Lucknow*, 83, 87; Rauf Parekh, “Women’s Secret Language and Waheeda Naseem,” *Dawn*, 30 October 2011; Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 25–28.

134 Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 18; Rudaulvi, Personal communication.

135 Swang is performed by small theatre groups in open air. They sing and dance folk and devotional stories with theatrical and mimicry elements. Nautanki is a secular form of playful theatre containing folklorist, social and epic content widespread in Northern India. Taj, *Court of Indar*, 8.

The description of the sleeping and largely powerless Raja Indar is a thinly veiled allusion to Wajid 'Ali Shah in his Lucknow palace. Following Taj's interpretation, the inactive and greedy Gulfam symbolises the pampered princes at court. The red demon, with red a symbol for the British, can be understood as the meddling of British officials. Akin to the powerful tawaifs of Awadh, Sabz Pari draws on the language of spring and revolution (with the Hindustani/Persian word for revolution "enqelab" explicitly used) and is the female heroine, who outgrows the traditions and troubles of her times. It is she who struggles for her beloved prince Gulfam, who can be understood as the Indian nation of debased princes in a reversal of typical gender roles of nationalism. Taj argues further that the parallel employment of literary and thematic elements from the Indian, Persian, Muslim and Hindu should be understood as an intentional weaving together of cultures and religions as a basis for nascent Indian nationalism. Whether Amanat had foreseen his theatrical creation to play such a political role, by the 1920s Saksena noted that Indian theatre groups staged the *Indar Sabha* as a "piece de resistance."¹³⁶

8 Preserving Hindustani Literature among Nations

After Rosen returned to Germany it took him a few years until he completed his doctoral dissertation on Amanat's *Indar Sabha* in 1891. The major labour was the complete translation of the piece into German. Having become an instructor of Hindustani and Persian in Berlin in the meantime, he found little spare time to complete complementary research in European archives, with which to round off his analysis. If attaining the title of doctor was not only to signal his intellectual distinction socially but also qualify him for further scholarly endeavours, submitting his doctoral dissertation in Leipzig was to be taken seriously.¹³⁷

During the year and a half Rosen spent in India he had come to learn a fair bit about British Indian politics and understood that the *Indar Sabha* had been shaped by politics and theatre censorship. His analysis of the play, however, did

¹³⁶ Taj, *Court of Indar*, 92–102, 128–30, 172–92; Saksena, *Urdu Literature*, 352.

¹³⁷ There were two versions of Rosen's dissertation. One dated from 1891 was submitted by Rosen for examination at the University Leipzig. The second from 1892 was for circulation. In translation and analysis they were virtually the same but the 1892 version included a complete black and white lithographic copy of the original illustrated text. Friedrich Rosen, *Die Indar-sabhā des Amānat. Ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis der Hindustani-Litteratur. Inaugural-Dissertation der Hohen Philosophischen Fakultät der Universität Leipzig zur Erlangung der Doktorwürde* (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1891), V; Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, V.

not produce an analysis that spoke to the immediate political relevance the play had in India at the time. Rather, in addressing a European audience Rosen's analysis dissented on the level of scholarship and cultural hegemony. He detached modern Indian theatre from the derivative-from-antiquity discourse that Europeans were obsessed with and proclaimed a modern development of national Indian theatre in its own right. The aims of his dissertation titled *Die Indarsabhā des Amānat. Ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis der Hindustani-Litteratur* were twofold: "To open up a new field – that of the modern dramatic literature of the Hindustani – to the European reader interested in the Orient", and to convey an awareness of the "eigentümliches Volksleben" (idiosyncratic popular life) and the interesting modern cultural developments of India before "they would have found their demise in the all-levelling European culture".¹³⁸

These goals stood in sharp contrast to European scholars at the time, who based their understanding of the *Indar Sabha* on reading Oman's description that to his "untutored ear, the measure and the music seemed always the same, and the sentiments, as far as I could understand them, not very novel" and thought like Lévi that nothing much had happened in Indian theatre since antiquity constituted its "fundamental identity".¹³⁹ Instead of dismissing Amanat's piece – or for that matter all contemporary Indian theatre developments that did not relate to Sanskrit drama – as "bizarre", "indecent" or worthless, Rosen analysed the differing influences of Persian and Hindustani language and poetry forms in the drama and found a developing contemporary Indian theatre. Decidedly portraying a cultural and social phenomenon that was not pure in one way or another, the *Indar Sabha* was for Rosen a living testimony of the Indian people and their ability to produce original art that combined the varying cultural and religious influences of the subcontinent.

Rosen's interest in and frequent recurrence to the theme of "Volksleben" and what was "volkstümlich" in India put him in line with the at the time influential discipline of "Völkerpsychologie" that was propelled by the optimism of the establishment of the German state and the "belief in progress that characterized liberal thinking". Countering the individualism of enlightenment philosophy and a predecessor to sociology, for many of its proponents, as Klautke noted, "the folk spirit was not only an important aspect of history, but its driving force. A complete and adequate understanding of the folk spirit would explain the historical development of mankind in its entirety."¹⁴⁰ Rosen's dissertation

¹³⁸ Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, III.

¹³⁹ Oman, *Indian Life*, 191; Lévi, *Théâtre indien*, 405, 416.

¹⁴⁰ Egbert Klautke, *The Mind of the Nation. Völkerpsychologie in Germany, 1851–1955* (New York: Berghahn, 2013), 2–4.

was, thus, not only an effort to bring to a German audience understanding of cultures from an exotic, faraway land but tied in to the transnational intellectual labours that accompanied the rise of the German nation-state. Next to making the *Indar Sabha* accessible in German through translation, he thus offered an explanation of its plot, and situated the piece in Indian literature and theatre productions of the nineteenth century.

The translation of the libretto itself formed the main body of his dissertation. The analysis is twenty-nine pages long and conformed to academic style in that it relied on available scholarly sources. Original terms were transcribed to German and sometimes printed in their original Urdu or Hindi script.¹⁴¹ Rosen set out by establishing that in India, like almost everywhere, theatre had arisen from religious festivities, comparing Hindu celebrations such as kali puja, durga puja, vasanta and holi to pre-Aeschylean Greek dramaturgy (sixth century BCE) or that of the Christian Middle Ages.¹⁴² Steering clear of his supervisor Ernst Windisch's influential hypothesis of Greek influence on Indian theatre during the Alexandrian era (fourth century BCE), he assigned the ancient *Mahabharata* and *Ramayan* the role "Ur-Epic" that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* held in Europe.¹⁴³ Next to these two distant potential influences on Hindustani drama Rosen found a poetic and epic corpus introduced to India through the Turco-Persian conquerors of the Timurid Empire (fourteenth to sixteenth century CE), among which he included *A Thousand and One Night*, *Laila wa Majnun*, *Aladin* and legends about Muslim saints.

Rosen found little in the way of socio-historical dramas in the Persian tradition – at the time unaware of the Shi'ite ta'ziya (passion plays) tradition or of the exodus of scholars and poets from Iran to India with the fall of the Safavid Empire. Particularly in Bengal he observed a flourishing scene of theatre that he believed to inspire Hindustani social drama. Bengali theatre he saw influenced by British theatre and, in line with Chattopadhyaya's work, by ancient Sanskrit dramas. After emphasising that there were already changes in the production and decoration of theatre stages before European influences became dominant in the second half of the nineteenth century, he summed up his overview of traditions and styles as "in today's India we find dramatic productions of all developmental forms, from the oldest to the youngest."¹⁴⁴

¹⁴¹ Schimmel noted that Rosen's translations and transliterations were accurate. Schimmel, *German Pakistani Linguistics*, 78.

¹⁴² Taj confirms this argumentation. Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 1; Taj, *Court of Indar*, 36–43.

¹⁴³ Blangstrup, "Windisch," 218.

¹⁴⁴ Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 3–4.

He observed that almost all actors in the 1880s were Parsis from Bombay, who did not speak Urdu as their mother tongue. He believed this phenomenon to be due to their lighter skin, “greater intelligence and flexibility, freedom from prejudice, and the presence in the most progressive city of India”, allowing the Parsis to take on the monopoly of theatre productions. Sharar would have disagreed, finding that the taking over of the Parsis led to the “deterioration in our tastes in drama” and replacing skilful singing and dancing with superior stagecraft and “magical scenery with marvellously painted stages”. Rosen noted that the Parsis had Hindustani theatre pieces transcribed into Gujarati and that most plays were purely staged by men. Only in Bengal did he also see women take to the stage. Rosen thought this to be due to a largely Muslim audience taking offence at female acting, though not posing an issue in largely Hindu Calcutta. Gupt largely confirms Rosen’s description, but notes that Muslim women in central Indian Hyderabad performed the *Indar Sabha* as an act of emancipation and that the Zoroastrian Parsi press of Bombay could be just as dismissive of women acting as Muslims. Williams has shown that in Calcutta older Mughal era aesthetic along the art forms of female nautch dance and poetry practices lived on, even as sensualist arts became frowned upon in colonial circles.¹⁴⁵ Theatre stages, Rosen observed, imitated European designs but special boxes often allowed women to stay in purdah while enjoying the spectacle. Echoing Lady Dufferin’s misgivings of artificial Europeanisation through dress, Rosen deplored the costumes he saw in most theatres, as lacking historical accuracy and ruined by the usage of poor British textiles. Dramas varied in length but often lasted all night, as Rosen found that “the Indian music system connects certain odes to particular hours of the night”, while more modern performances only lasted three to four hours.¹⁴⁶

Not aware of Wajid ‘Ali Shah’s dramatic productions, Rosen found that “*Indar Sabha* appears, according to everything that I have examined in my own observations, oral transmissions, and own studies of the for me accessible prints of this play, to be the oldest art-drama of Urdu, and the real starting point of Hindustani dramaturgy”. Rosen found the dispersal of Lucknow intellectuals after the crackdown on the 1857 rebellion as the main reason for the spread of the *Indar Sabha*, arguing that the play had profited from the poetic atmosphere of Wajid ‘Ali Shah’s court, whom Rosen knew as a “celebrated poet and friend of

¹⁴⁵ Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 4–5; Sharar, *Lucknow*, 147; Gupt, *The Parsi Theatre*, 118–37, 170; Williams, “Songs Between Cities”.

¹⁴⁶ Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 5–6; Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, *Our Viceregal Life*, vol. 2, 58.

music". The growth of the printing press Rosen saw as further propelling the wide spread of the *Indar Sabha* in India.¹⁴⁷ The popular appeal Rosen thought due to the Muslim author Amanat integrating popular ideas of Hindus into a Persian-inspired and "perfectly shaped" Urdu that appealed to all members of society.

Although in India shortly after the founding of the Indian National Congress in 1885 and amid an uptick in political agitation through theatre, Rosen did not grasp or relay any political components in the content of the *Indar Sabha*. Rather, Rosen noted for his German audience that the "European art judge" may be inclined to belittle the piece, if applying European tastes. Reminiscent of Mookherji's advice that Europeans should "should have patience and understand [Lucknawi performance art] before forming their opinion", Rosen found that the *Indar Sabha* "emanates an idiosyncratic magic on every Indian, and likewise on Europeans, who have stepped more closely towards the new-Indian character". What sparked this magic was the interplay of Persian-inspired ghazals and masnavis with Hindi folk songs, which Rosen found to be "most loyal" representation of the interrelations of Hinduism and Islam in India.¹⁴⁸

Engaged in pioneering Orientalist work in studying contemporary Urdu theatre, Rosen took pains to understand his object of research and situate it in whatever scholarly or non-scholarly works he could find. The sources he noted were eclectic. After describing but largely discarding the major authority on Hindustani literature in Europe Tassy, he took cues from works that came out of the colonial British context at Fort William and the Asiatic Society of Calcutta, as well as non-European Indian publications and oral testimonies that he gathered in Calcutta, Lucknow and in surrounding Awadh, Lahore and Bombay.¹⁴⁹

The main input Rosen gained was from the biography of Latafat, which he found in Amanat's posthumous compilation *Divan-e Amanat*, after inquiring into the life story of the author in Lucknow.¹⁵⁰ Rosen singled out the religious references in the biography and came to the conclusion that Amanat would have been ashamed of the *Indar Sabha*, which was not in line with the sanctimonious view the author had of himself. A list of eleven Urdu plays that were inspired in one way or another by the *Indar Sabha* as well as versions of the piece in the Gujarati and Devanagari languages served as evidence for its prom-

147 Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 13–14.

148 Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 7; Hunter, *Imperial Gazetteer*, 127; Mookherji, *Pictorial Lucknow*, 185.

149 Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 8.

150 Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 9.

inence across the continent.¹⁵¹ A number of influences that informed his understanding and analysis of the *Indar Sabha* were not mentioned, such as his affiliation with the Dufferins or the experiences he made travelling India that he discussed in newspaper and journal articles on India's economy, caste and social relations. Also absent from his cited sources were the dozens of cheap water colour paintings on scratch paper of Indian railway schedules he collected in India that captured scenes from daily life and the rich diversity of Indian literary and religious motives in popular circulation at the time.¹⁵²

On dialect variations Rosen cited at length the 1879 *New Hindustani-English Dictionary* by the Calcutta-based government official Fallon, who noted that Braj, a Hindi dialect, also called thenth (without Persian influence) was a language spoken mostly by simple rural women, whereas rekhti (mixed with Persian influences) was spoken by their urban counterparts. For Fallon it was important to note these differences to improve British understanding of their Indian subjects that would lead to better government. After encountering these differences of language between Lucknow and the surrounding countryside Rosen found these dialect differences also in the language of the *Indar Sabha*. In a show of his philological prowess Rosen produced a comparative table of thenth and rekhti, analysing sound changes and form changes in pronouns and verbs of the theatre play.¹⁵³ The Persian-originated Urdu, Rosen posited in his analysis, was in comparison to the Hindi the artistically more advanced, but emotionally colder, language. Around this differentiation, he built an argument that took as baseline the increasing migration of Hindi-speakers from the countryside to the Urdu-speaking urban centres. While the Persian verse and meter supposedly spoke to the intellect, both male and female members of the audiences of the *Indar Sabha* could on an emotional level connect with passages in the “warm” Hindi thenth dialects. They would feel reminded of the warmth of originality, home, simplicity, motherhood and motherly humour – a return home through theatrical imag-

151 Among them were the *Indar Sabha* of Madari Lal, the *Farrukh Sabha*, the satirical *Bandar Sabha* (court of the monkeys), and plays with different plotlines that employed the *Indar Sabha*'s the main stylistic elements. Gupt, *The Parsi Theatre*, 175; Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 18–21.

152 Railway, Colorisations, ASWPC (1870s–1880s). Amir Theilhaber, “Innenschau der imperial-geschichtlichen Bestände Friedrich Rosens in Detmold,” in *Koloniale Welten in Westfalen*, Andreas Neuwöhner, Barbara Frey and Sebastian Bischoff (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2020)

153 Taj noted Rosen's differentiation was oversimplified. Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 22–23; S. W. Fallon and Lala Faqir Chand, *A New English-Hindustani Dictionary, with Illustrations from English Literature and Colloquial English Translated into Hindustani* (Banaras: Medical Hall Press, 1879), III; Taj, *Court of Indar*, 148.

ination.¹⁵⁴ Rosen summed up the processes of urbanisation and rural flight shared between Germany and India with a poem he had heard in the Awadhi countryside – a doha (rhyming couplet) rendered in Hindi and followed in German translation:

Gold zu suchen ging mein Geliebter und verödet war mein Heim;
Er fand kein Gold und kehrte nicht wieder und Silber ward mein Haar.¹⁵⁵

In search of gold my beloved went and deserted was my home;
He found no gold and did not return and my hair turned silver.

The underlying interests of Rosen's analysis and argument were intertwined. He wanted to find and show authentic India through *Indar Sabha* in the context of Hindustani drama. In it he found an independent progressiveness, which was not a European import, but arising out of an original and living culture. At the same time, he thought that European cultural onslaught did not inspire or stimulate Indian theatre for the better, but corrupted and debilitated it. As Rosen feared the levelling and demise of Indian culture under European expansion, he attempted at preserving what was left – something contemporary and modern. He did so for a German-reading European audience. The “idiosyncratic” *Indar Sabha*, with its complex linguistic, religious and cultural amalgamations, as well as the “interesting” cultural developments of India's composite culture, thrilled Rosen. The combination of vernacular and literary languages from across several religious and ethnic communities made for “supra-local forms of popular identification” which provided the bedrock for nation-building that Rosen implicitly supported with his analysis.¹⁵⁶ Finding “vernacular Indian literature, so close to its Germanic sister”, Rosen did not develop a concrete concept of what India or the Indian nation entailed, but he found the “Indian character”, reflected in the *Indar Sabha*, threatened by Europeanisation.¹⁵⁷ The sources for this appropriation of a theatre play for the cause of the Indian nation were not only found in Rosen being able to see what German folk psychology allowed him to see. Amid increasing nationalist Indian agitation in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Rosen's exchanges with intellectual Indian circles of Calcutta, booksellers and his collaborator in Lahore Sadrudin Khan provided further input. Beyond the simple preservation of the *Indar Sabha*, Rosen hoped to ena-

154 Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 26–28.

155 Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 28.

156 Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780. Programme, Myth, Reality*, 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 46.

157 Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, III.

ble Germans to gain a better understanding of their contemporary Indian kin – a solidarity among nations.

At twenty-nine pages Rosen's discussion can be understood as generalising and simplistic or too speculative. The most gaping lack in his analysis was that of the music and dance forms. He only noted that the musicians hidden behind the stage played tabla and sarangi and that the musical performances would require further analysis.¹⁵⁸ Rosen also did not engage with what the play and its plot said about politics. He had been privy to some of the symbolic interactions and exchanges of the viceregal court and with the nawabs in India, but he did not draw any parallels to the actions of Raja Indra and the contentious relationship with Sabz Pari in the play. The rejection of gifts should have reminded him of the Khillat practices he witnessed, but he did conceive that the play's ongoing popularity could stem from these cloaked criticisms of the political authorities. Whether he did not see, or saw but would not write about this cannot be determined. Some of his characterisations ring crass with gender bias and racial categorisation and Rizavi's and Taj's corrections and criticism are entirely appropriate.

Most striking is that Rosen picked up on the variations of language between genders, but read this entirely in the context of the transformation of society through rural flight and the loss of the homely due to European-style industrialisation. He did not square *begmaati zaban* (feminine parlance) with the impact colonial British mores had on gender roles since the rebellion or grasped in any way the powerful role the *tawaifs* had played in Lucknow that found reflection in Sabz Pari. Instead he assigned Islam to have a restrictive role on women, preventing him from seeing the agency Amanat had given to Sabz Pari and the powerful role she symbolised as a harbinger of Indian revolt.

Some of these inadequacies should be situated: in assigning some form of superiority to Parsi acting in connection to their lighter skin colour, Rosen speaks of the intelligence of the Parsis in the context of a vibrant and progressive city, in which adaptability to different cultural and language forms was more frequent. Furthermore, he criticised facial whitening as "an ugly custom" and superfluous imitation of European make-up. His descriptions of Islam and of the *thenth* and *rekhta* dialects were simplistic but should not be read as rigid categorisations, but as loose, underdeveloped tools, employed to describe and explain a drama in its different components to an entirely ignorant German audience. Rosen's grappling with these categories of peoples, languages, cultures and religions led him to ponder on their seeming contradictions, imbrications,

158 Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, 5.

parallels and reciprocal fertilisations and pushed him to chart the *Indar Sabha* from a number of angles, arriving at the conclusion that it was emblematic of a culturally rich and diverse Indian people.

Having arrived in India firmly integrated in the British colonial apparatus he came to tell a nationalist Indian narrative that dismissed the European focus on the ancient past and frequent arrogant ignorance in the face of Indian contemporary cultural developments. Rather than cleaving to philological tunnel vision and separating out supposedly Aryan and Semitic language or cultural elements, Rosen went looking for a living India. He got up close, opened his eyes and ears and asked questions about things he did not understand. Then he took a theatre play that burst with different poetical cultures and cross-stimulations and thought that its translation could serve for a better understanding of India in Europe – or at least for preserving an art scene he saw destined to disappear.

9 Non-reception

Neither of his supervisors at the university of Leipzig, or anyone in Germany for that matter, had any profound knowledge of Hindustani or modern Indian languages at the time. Hindustani was not entirely absent from universities, but scholars of Sanskrit, Arabic or Turkish offered introductory courses on the sidelines only. Tassy's work on Hindustani literature was the gold standard and there was little discernible interest among German scholars in the contemporary language.¹⁵⁹ The Arabist Loth, who occasionally taught Hindustani in Leipzig, had died in 1881 and so Rosen looked elsewhere for academic guidance. Ernst Windisch, a philologist specialising in Sanskrit and Indo-Germanic grammar, whom Rosen still knew from his student days became his first doctoral supervisor. His second supervisor, Ludolf Krehl, was the chief librarian of the Leipzig university library and an Arabist interested in early Islam and mysticism, as well as a friend of Rosen's father Georg.¹⁶⁰ What attracted the professors was Rosen's ability to produce something new. Rosen brought with him original manuscripts from India and translated sources unknown in Europe, such as Latafat's biography of Amanat, and drew on a variety of sources out of the British Indian context of Hindustani studies. His compilation of manuscripts would serve as a reference

159 Tassy, *Langue et littérature Hindoustanies*; Ernst Kuhn, "Vorderindien," *ZDMG* 33, no. 1 (1879): 58.

160 Stache-Rosen, *German Indologists*, 106; Konstantin Hermann, "Krehl, Christoph Ludolf Ehrenfried," in *Sächsische Biografie*. http://saebi.isgv.de/biografie/Ludolf_Krehl_%281825-1901%29; Wokoeck, *German Orientalism*, 131.

work, expand the library's collection and thus its relevance for scholars. Rosen also placated philological requirements by showing origins and lines of relations of languages that had not previously been studied. Krehl praised Rosen's dissertation after submission in 1889 as "interesting, examining an entirely new object very meticulously and in truly scholarly manner."¹⁶¹ Recognising that his work benefited greatly from studying Hindustani in India for over a year, Windisch agreed with Krehl in grading Rosen's dissertation with a IIa, equivalent to a straight 'A'.¹⁶²

Following its publication in 1891/2 there was no reception of Rosen's dissertation in German academia or in the general public. In 1890 Rosen had left teaching Hindustani and Persian at the Seminar für Orientalische Sprachen (SOS) in Berlin and had entered the German foreign service in Tehran. From there he had few options to market his book in Germany, and an ongoing legal dispute with Eduard Sachau, the director of the SOS in Berlin, did not bode well for a friendly scholarly discussion. By 1893 fourteen copies had been sold. Contrary to unsubstantiated claims, first apparently by Schimmel, that the *Indar Sabha* entered German theatre in an adaptation by Paul Lincke, his 1899 *Im Reich des Indra* bears no resemblance with the *Indar Sabha* but the title. *Im Reich des Indra* is an operetta in the style of pure Oriental invention that mashes Berlin folklore, Prussian marching tunes and places between Ethiopia and fiction into a smash hit for Berlin's lower classes. None of the records surrounding the genesis of Lincke's hasty production indicates that he or his librettist Heinrich Bolten-Baeckers knew or were influenced by Rosen's publication. Equally, Rosen did not take any credit or saw his translation of the *Indar Sabha* in any way connected to Lincke's *Indar Sabha*.¹⁶³ A 1910 foreword Rosen wrote for a new edition, that ended up not being published, noted that

161 Rosen had originally submitted his dissertation shortly before being appointed to Beirut as dragoman in 1889. Windisch and Krehl suggested citation clarifications for publications not available in Europe, i.e. manuscripts in Urdu and Gujarati. The transport of manuscripts from Berlin and Lahore to Rosen's consular postings in Beirut and then later to Tehran was complicated and resulted in Rosen only publishing his dissertation and being granted the title of doctor in 1891/2. Promotionsakte Friedrich Rosen, 1891, Phil Fak Prom 5288, UAL; Sadar Wasiram Singh to Friedrich Rosen, 16 August 1895, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 10 September 1890, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG.

162 Promotionsakte Friedrich Rosen, 1891, Phil Fak Prom 5288, UAL.

163 Taj, *Court of Indar*, 82; Schimmel, *Urdu Literature to Iqbāl*, 192; Franz Born, *Berliner Luft. Eine Weltstadt und ihr Komponist. Paul Lincke* (Berlin: Apollo-Verlag, 1966); Edmund Nick, *Paul Lincke* (Hamburg: Musikverlag Hans Sikorski, 1953); Paul Lincke, 55 2 NL Paul Lincke, Sta-BiB Musikabteilung; Leopold Ely and Bolten-Bäckers, Paul Lincke, *Text der Gesänge zu Im Reich des Indra* (Berlin: Apollo-Verlag, 1900) TI 517 Mus., P.1910, StaBiB Musikabteilung.

the *Indar Sabha* had been “so gut wie unbekannt geblieben. Und doch ist es soviel wir wissen das einzige in deutscher Sprache erschienen wissenschaftliche Werk über die Hindustani-Literatur... und vielleicht überhaupt das einzige neuerer Werk, welches sich mit den Drama und der darin verworbenen Lyrik des Hindustani (Urdu und Hindi) beschäftigt.”¹⁶⁴

Aside from circumstantial obstacles to its proliferation there were structural reasons for a lack of wider scholarly engagement. A dissertation about an Indian drama performance from the 1840s, in a rather unoriginal language of varying cultural and linguistic influences, mongrel as it was, and not connecting to supposed Aryan language origins, was wildly avant-garde for what was an inquisitive but conservative audience of Orientalistik. Sanskrit and the study of other ancient languages was the order of the day at German and other European faculties of philology. Out of a total of one hundred and fourteen dissertations defended at German universities between 1885 and 1899 that dealt with Oriental languages in one way or another, only five were concerned with modern subjects. This was mirrored in the sub-field of Indology. Thirty-six dissertations were written on ancient Indian languages or religions and another six centred on the linguistic origins of Indo-Germanic languages.¹⁶⁵

The discursive reasons for this focus on Indian and other Oriental antiquity lay on the one hand with the heavy philological emphasis of German Orientalistik reaching back to Protestant linguistic examinations of the veracity of the Bible and with the discovery of language families around 1800 that caused a number of European scholars to look for the origins of mankind outside of the Jewish-Christian creation story. If European and Indian and Iranian languages were similar, they shared a common ancestor, which many thought may guide to the origins of humanity in a pre-Biblical past. A more recent impetus had been the rising nationalist fervour, which motivated a more concentrated search for the German nation's origins in an Indo-German distant past.¹⁶⁶ Also, more practical reasons caused German Orientalistik's emphasis on topics removed

164 “remained almost unknown. And still it is as far as we know the only in German published scholarly work about Hindustani literature... and perhaps the only newer work, which deals with the drama and the therein woven lyric of Hindustani.” F.A. Brockhaus to Friedrich Rosen, 12 October 1894, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen, *die Indarsabhā des Amanat* etc, 1910, manuscript, ASWPC; Enno Littmann, “Friedrich Rosen 1856–1935,” in *Ein Jahrhundert Orientalistik. Lebensbilder aus der Feder von Enno Littmann und Verzeichnis seiner Schriften zum achtzigsten Geburtstage am 16. September 1955*, Rudi Paret and Anton Schall (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1955), 76.

165 *Jahres-Verzeichnis der an den Deutschen Universitäten erschienenen Schriften. 15. August 1890 bis 14. August 1891* (Berlin: A.Ascher & Co, 1891), 297.

166 Léon Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth. A History of Racist and Nationalist Ideas in Europe*, trans. Howard Edmund (New York: Meridian, 1977).

from extra-European current affairs. Like Windisch and Krehl, the typical late nineteenth century German Orientalist would not have the means or time to travel to distant lands. The journey to India in the 1880s from Leipzig to Calcutta could take a good month – semester breaks were only two months long – and cost more than what could be spared on a scholar's salary.¹⁶⁷ Many German Orientalists would make do with second-hand information received from French or British colleagues with more travel opportunities, or they would study old manuscripts found in libraries.¹⁶⁸

Research patterns of Orientalist scholarship elsewhere were similar, as a breakdown of theses in Denmark France during the same period shows. Between 1885 and 1899 there were three theses dealing with ancient India. In the period 1836 to 1926 out of 26 theses on Oriental topics, 12 dealt with ancient India. For young Danish scholars Indian mythology and masculinity in the *Mahabharata* was just one of a series of ancient Indian topics that served well as a dissertation topic. As in Germany, only at the turn of the century medieval and more contemporary topics became slightly more common.¹⁶⁹ French doctoral theses were more spread out geographically and temporally for the period 1884 to 1899. Out of nineteen Orientalist dissertations only five dealt with India: one with Sanskrit, three with the Indo-European languages and one with a history of Indian theatre from the beginning of time – the above-mentioned work of Lévi, that belittled the *Indar Sabha* and dedicated a total of twenty-three pages out of four hundred and twenty-nine to contemporaneous Indian theatre.¹⁷⁰ Overall, the number of French theses dealing with the Orient lagged behind German output. Medieval and colonial topics were more prevalent and in the humanities Greek and Roman languages and history enjoyed a higher popularity for doctoral work.

167 Chattopādhyāya, “German University Life,” 15.

168 On the development of German Orientalistik, the centrifugal system of European Orient studies for large parts of the nineteenth century, and its heavy philological focus until the close of the nineteenth century, its bifurcation into Semitic and Indo-Germanic languages, and its long neglect of *Realien*, the study of contemporary things, such as drama, see Marchand, *German Orientalism*; Wokoeck, *German Orientalism*; Mangold, “Weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft”.

169 University Library of Copenhagen, ed., *Danish Theses for the Doctorate and Commemorative Publications of the University of Copenhagen. 1836–1926. A Bio-Bibliography* (Copenhagen: Levin & Munksgaard, 1926).

170 Ministère de l'instruction publique, *Catalogue des thèses et écrits académiques. 1884–1889* (Paris: Librairie Hachette & Co, 1892), 40–41; Ministère de l'instruction publique, *Catalogue des thèses et écrits académiques. 1889–1894* (Paris: Librairie Hachette & Co, 1894), 81; Ministère de l'instruction publique, *Catalogue des thèses et écrits académiques. 1894–1899* (Paris: Librairie Hachette & Co, 1899), 241, 382, 704; Lévi, *Théâtre indien*, 393–416.

Modern topics of dissertation in linguistics, culture or history were as absent in Denmark and France as they were in Germany. At German universities the world beyond was also studied in other disciplines. A total of sixty-two theses dealt with African ethnography, Japanese law and society, trade among Arabs, Persian mineralogy, ancient Abyssinian, Chinese history, or Russo-British imperialism in Afghanistan. Among these were more practice oriented topics with numbers rising towards the turn of the century, but interest in the contemporary history or literary exploits of Orientals as a doctoral thesis remained meek.¹⁷¹

Only one further thesis was presented on a modern literary topic in German Indology. Not coincidentally it was also on Hindustani poetry from Lucknow and the same author of the *Indar Sabha*. Hubert Jansen's dissertation dealt with the Urdu genre *wasokht* and was titled *Bemerkungen zur Verskunst im Urdū als Teil der Einleitung zum Transkriptionstext der Wāsōkht des Amānat* (remarks on the verse art in Urdu as part of the introduction to the transcription text of the *Wasokht* of Amanat). Two years Rosen's senior, Jansen had been his Hindustani student at the SOS in Berlin.¹⁷² With his *Indar Sabha* belittled, Amanat's *Wasokht* was at the time entirely unknown in European Oriental studies. As Rosen's collection holds original copies of the *Wasokht* and Jansen's only travels outside Europe had been in Morocco, Rosen likely supplied Jansen with the manuscript and the idea of producing a translation and analysis of the *Wasokht*.¹⁷³ Rosen also lent his copy of the *Diwan-e Amanat* to Jansen and proofread his transcription of the Urdu text into Latin letters. When Jansen's supervisors Windisch and Krehl, whom Rosen had suggested, realised that the topic was an analysis of Urdu prosody, Windisch suggested Rosen as second reader and Jansen later dedicated his thesis to "his highly esteemed Hindustani-teacher, Herrn Dr. Fritz Rosen in Tehran in gratefulness."¹⁷⁴ Jansen's work reads as a normal philological work, being extraordinary only in the sense that it applied the philological toolbox of the German schools to a poetic collection of a relatively recent creation. Not having had the chance to travel to India, Jansen's work lacked the social, cultural and religious context in which Rosen had embedded the *Indar Sabha*.

171 An exception was Oskar Mann, who in 1891 wrote his dissertation on the history of Persia between the years 1747 and 1750. Mann and Rosen were friends. *Jahres-Verzeichnis der an den Deutschen Universitäten erschienen Schriften. 15. August 1890 bis 14. August 1891*, 263.

172 *Jahres-Verzeichnis der an den Deutschen Universitäten erschienen Schriften. 15 August 1893 bis 14. August 1894* (Berlin: A. Ascher & Co, 1894), 171.

173 Agha Hasan Amanat, *Wasokht [in Hindustani]*, ASWPC.

174 Hubert Jansen to Friedrich Rosen, 16 May 1893, ASWPC; Hubert Jansen, "Bemerkungen zur Verskunst im Urdū als Teil der Einleitung zum Transkriptionstext der Wāsōkht des Amānat" (PhD diss., University of Leipzig, 1893), III.

The “lingua franca of India, Hindustani”, as Schimmel observed, was “too modern to attract the interest of scholars in 19th century Germany, when Orientalist studies began to develop; and, if it was mentioned at all, it was a rather unimportant appendix to the classical Islamic languages.” And it remained that way. Contrary to Schimmel’s argument that Rosen’s and Jansen’s works signalled a rise of Hindustani studies in the 1890s, no significant scholarly interest in Hindustani or other related modern topics developed.¹⁷⁵ Rosen’s argumentation did not fit into the Orientalist fora of reception in Germany and consequently fell on deaf ears. Just as Jansen’s dissertation was only published in parts in a journal of the rather marginal Italian Orientalist society, the only immediate discussion of Rosen’s translation of the *Indar Sabha* was in a short review in Hungarian by the junior scholar Sándor Kégl – also outside the central German journals of Orientalistik. Kégl credited Rosen for his work and agreed that only through studying Indian folk drama could the Indian people’s character be understood. The play itself he thought idiotic.¹⁷⁶ Rosen’s work was more in line with applied British publications on and in Urdu, but with the language of publication being German, Rosen’s translation was not accessible for a larger British audience. In any case, his thinly concealed empire-critical opinions and the modern theatre play did not fit research agendas across the channel. The lecturer of Hindustani at Oxford, Colonel Robert St. John, turned Rosen away, proving to him “with many good arguments that a play of that kind could not possibly exist.”¹⁷⁷

This Oxford view was mimicked by some in British India. Anticipating the culture fights Indian nationalism would inherit from British imperialism, the poet and Indologist with a doctorate from Berlin University Harilala Harshadaraaya Dhruva addressed the International Orientalist Congress in London in 1892 with a talk on “The rise of the drama in the modern Aryan vernaculars of India”. He argued that modern vernacular drama essentially only existed in his native Gujarat, where it manifested the true continuation of ancient Sanskrit

¹⁷⁵ Schimmel, *German Pakistani Linguistics*, 1–9, 78–81.

¹⁷⁶ Kégl was a student of Ignaz Goldziher and Ármin Vámbéry. Hubert Jansen, “Bemerkungen zur Verskunst im Urdü,” *Giornale della Società Asiatica Italiana* 7 (1893): 255–316; Filipa Lowndes Vicente, “Orientalism on the Margins: The Interest in Indian Antiquity in Nineteenth Century Italy,” *Res Antiquitatis. Journal of Ancient History* 1 (2010): 19; Sándor Kégl, “Amánat és a Hindustáni dráma,” *Egyetemes Filológiai Közlöny* XVIII (1894): 38–42; Kinga Dévényi, Ágnes Kelecsényi, and Tamás Sajó, trans., “Biography. Alexander Kégl (1862–1920). A Polymath of Oriental Studies and His Collection” (2010). <http://kegl.mtak.hu/en/02.htm>.

¹⁷⁷ Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 81; Joseph Foster, *Oxford Men. 1880–1892. With a Record of Their Schools Honours and Degrees* (Oxford: James Parker, 1893), 533.

drama and with that the Aryan spirit. Citing the scholar of Sanskrit and Arabic Syed Ali Bilgrami Shums-ul-Uluma of Hyderabad, Dhruva ruled out that “any dramas exist in Urdu at all... on account of the Mahomedan religious influence... I am, of course, leaving out of account the so-called Urdu productions of the Parsi theatre, and also the *Indar Sabha*, which properly speaking, is not a drama.” Compiling a bibliography of Sanskrit drama and modern dramatic literature in 1906, Montgomery Schuyler, secretary of the US legation in Siam, could not find any further scholarship on Hindustani dramatic productions than what Rosen, Kégl and Dhruva had written.¹⁷⁸ Rosen was the main German authority on Hindustani theatre and Hindustani language more broadly, but he had abandoned his field for a position in diplomacy and thus the German study of Hindustani faltered before it took off.

10 Jump-starting a Career in the Orient

The employment Rosen found with the Dufferins gave him the chance to study languages, learn about cultures and encounter people that were for most Europeans still out of reach. With his British hosts not free of imperial conceit but aware of cultural differences and intent on imperial integration, the entrance to India Rosen gained from his movement in the structures of the British empire did not tie him in loyalty or perception to British views. Shaped by an upbringing in which casual and friendly contact with peoples of different background was normal, for Rosen regulated upper class British Indian life was just one microcosm among many he experienced during his year and half in India. Developing an interest in Indian theatrical performances, first in Calcutta and then across Northern India, Rosen came across the at the time most popular Hindustani drama and through his philological background realised its linguistic and cultural richness, as well as its contrariness to established European Indologist discourse. In comparison to other European studies of the Hindustani language, contemporary Indian theatre and modern Indian society under British rule, Rosen’s ensuing study was thoroughly novel. Measuring his work against a

178 Harilala Harshadaraya Dhruva, “The Rise of the Drama in the Modern Aryan Vernaculars of India,” in *Transactions of the Ninth International Congress of Orientalists (Held in London, 5th to 12th September 1892)*, E. Delmar Morgan (London: Committee of the Congress, 1893), 301; Romila Thapar, “Some Appropriations of the Theory of Aryan Race Relating to the Beginnings of Indian History,” in *The Aryan Debate*, Thomas R. Trautman (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005), 115–28; Montgomery Schuyler, *A Bibliography of the Sanskrit Drama with an Introductory Sketch of the Dramatic Literature of India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1906), 100.

yard stick of Lucknawi knowledge is tricky, as from today's perspective Rosen's errors and limitations are clear. But perhaps his contemporary Mookherji would have recognised that Rosen did not pass quick judgement, valued Awadhi culture and approached it with sympathetic curiosity that sought understanding.

In the context of German Orientalistik at the close of the nineteenth century, all of this meant that Rosen's dissertation was incompatible with dominant research and discourse structures. Indology dealt with antique India. Without connection to Sanskrit current theatre did not matter much and Rosen did not impact German understanding of Indian folk life, as he had hoped. Only when Indian scholars like Saksena took up the study of Hindustani drama in the 1920s was Rosen's *Indarsabha des Amanat* integrated into Indian intellectual labours that would come to inform and weigh in on the battles that nation-building in the subcontinent unleashed.¹⁷⁹ This genesis and reception of Friedrich Rosen's dissertation shows how the connection between imperial administration and scholarship in the Indian context challenged political and academic certitudes. The transnational triangulation between Rosen's national-liberalism and philological scholarship, British imperial politics of language and theatre and nascent Indian nationalism acted as a motor for an academic work that was of little immediate effect anywhere but would come to buttress an imagination of a pluralist Indian nation.

Rosen returned to Europe via Peshawar, Lahore, Karachi, Oman, Iran and the Caucasus to marry Nina Roche, with whom he had gotten engaged just before his departure for India in 1885. His stint in India would come to have cornucopian effects for his career. Next to his dissertation he published a number of articles and a Persian self-study book and delivered speeches on Indian and Persian subjects to German audiences – to “general appeal” as the director of the of Verein für Geographie und Statistik in Frankfurt thanked Rosen for a well-paid lecture.¹⁸⁰ His dissertation granted him the right to hold the title of doctor which came with symbolic capital. More practically, he had gained access to cross-national networks of the highest order. Equipped with a letter of recommendation from Dufferin, Rosen was welcomed by British envoys along his route back to Europe, who arranged for audiences with the Sultan of Oman,

¹⁷⁹ Saksena, *Urdu Literature*, 350–54; Rizavi, “Urdu Drama Aur Stage.”

¹⁸⁰ Friedrich Rosen to Hariot Dufferin, 2 September 1885, 7, Vol 103 Neg 4329, BL IOR; Friedrich Rosen, Questionnaire, 1890, Personalakten 012577, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, *Shumā Farsī hārf mizānīd (Sprechen Sie Persisch?): neupersischer Sprachführer, für die Reise und zum Selbstunterricht enthaltend eine kurze Grammatik, Wörtersammlung, Gespräche und Lesestücke* (Leipzig: Koch, 1890); Eberhard to Friedrich Rosen, 18 January 1890, ASWPC.

the Shah of Persia and other dignitaries.¹⁸¹ Returning from India with significantly improved language skills, a recommendation by Dufferin to German secretary of state Herbert von Bismarck opened up a position for Rosen at the newly founded SOS as teacher for Hindustani and Persian; the Berlin languages school was tasked with training German diplomats and merchants with the languages and cultural understanding necessary for success outside of Europe.¹⁸²

Cognitively and emotionally, Rosen's attachment to the British government of India with its pomp and bureaucratic machinery, his proximity to the Persian-studying viceroy Dufferin at its head, but also his observations of haughty European disdain of the culture and society which it ruled and disrupted would drive his future interactions in imperially-stratified and culturally diverse environments. For the German Bürger Rosen, the Irish aristocrat Dufferin had become a role model for worldliness and statesmanlike behaviour, as chancellor Bernhard von Bülow would later acclaim: "Rosen hatte Lord Dufferin nach Indien begleitet und dort seinen politischen Blick geschärft und im Verkehr mit einem hervorragenden Staatsmann die Kunst der Menschenbehandlung gelernt."¹⁸³

181 Friedrich Rosen, "Über seine Reise vom Persischen Golf nach dem Kaspischen Meer," *Verhandlungen der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde* 17 (12 April 1890): 286–98; Arthur Nicolson to Frederick Dufferin, 3 March 1887, F130–27 BL EM – Dufferin Collection.

182 Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Herbert von Bismarck, 7 October 1887, F130–26, BL EM – Dufferin Collection; Friedrich Rosen to Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, 6 September 1887, 19, Vol 108 Neg 4332, BL IOR; Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Georg Rosen, 23 April 1887, I 10520, Personalakten 012577, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bewerbungsschreiben, 29 June 1887, I 10520, Personalakten 012577, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Eduard Sachau, 18 August 1887, SOS, Rep. 208 A Nr 78, GStPK; Eduard Sachau, *Denkschrift über das Seminar für Orientalische Sprachen an der königlichen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Berlin von 1887 bis 1912* (Berlin: Reimer, 1912), 16.

183 "Rosen had accompanied Lord Dufferin to India and there sharpened his political eye and in intercourse with an outstanding statesman learned the art of treating humans." Bernhard von Bülow, *Denkwürdigkeiten. Weltkrieg und Zusammenbruch*, Franz von Stockhammern (Berlin: Ullstein, 1931), 8.

Chapter 3

Sword of the Dragoman. Immersion in an Embattled Region

1 Introduction

Until the end of the 1890s the Middle East was of little significance to German foreign affairs and the preponderance of other European powers in the region soberly recognised.¹ German political and economic interests were limited, and only few Germans lived or did business in Iran, where Rosen spent the longest time of his ten years in the lower ranks of the *Auswärtiges Amt*. The situation was similar in Rosen's stations in Beirut (1890) and Baghdad (1898). Only in Jerusalem (1899–1900) had Germany developed a stronger presence, as the visit of Kaiser Wilhelm II in 1898 symbolically underlined. Conversely, government officials in Iran and elsewhere outside of Europe “admired Bismarck for unifying Germany through war and diplomacy”, saw an economically and scientifically rising Germany and were keen on attracting German support to counter the accelerating encroachment of other European empires.² Another pull-factor for German involvement was that Britain sought to interest Germany politically and economically as a partner against Russian or French expansion, resulting in frequent cooperation, information sharing and social interaction between German and British consulates and legations.³ Rosen's moving between these political spheres, and his up-close experience of the seemingly unrelenting and often violent disintegration of governments, societies and cultures amid European imperialism left deep marks on his worldview that confirm Berman's observation that oppressive discourse did not necessitate oppressive action.⁴ Emblematic if

1 Martin overstated the impact the departure of Otto von Bismarck in 1890 had on German-Iranian relations. Schöllgen and Khatin-Shahidi provide more accurate periodisations with a rising German involvement in the Middle East around 1900. Martin, *German-Persian Diplomatic Relations*; Schöllgen, *Imperialismus und Gleichgewicht*; Rashid Armin Khatib-Shahidi, *German Foreign Policy towards Iran before World War II. Political Relations, Economic Influence and the National Bank of Persia* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2012), 7.

2 Abbas Amanat, *Iran. A Modern History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), 390.

3 See for comparison Otte's observation of a British-German “*rapprochement via [the] periphery*” concerning Chinese affairs. Harold Nicolson, *Sir Arthur Nicolson, Bart*, 60, 67; T.G. Otte, *The China Question: Great Power Rivalry and British Isolation, 1894–1905* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 91.

4 Berman, *German Literature on the Middle East*, 15.

not entirely representative of the German minority position, his interactions in the Persian, Arabic and Turkish languages next to those in English and French “offer a fresh perspective, even if a prejudiced one” to the history of politics and society during the last years of the Qajar dynasty in Iran and the broader region.⁵

With Rosen rising from the low ranks of German diplomacy as dragoman, chargé d'affaires and consul in a region of peripheral but increasing significance for German foreign affairs, he learned the diplomatic ropes from the bottom up.⁶ As German diplomacy underwent professionalisation and nationalisation, the reliance on foreign nationals for the crucial interpretation and translation job of the dragoman dwindled. German citizens who knew Oriental languages like Rosen were brought in and were then posted to distant diplomatic outposts with just a handful of staff. Viewed from Berlin, what counted in places like Beirut, Tehran or Baghdad was good reporting on the local political situation and the actions of the other European powers. This required engaging with various segments of society – local notables, religious figures, authorities, as well as foreign representatives. Rosen realised quickly that mastering languages, and the access to bodies of knowledge that languages provided, was very useful in facilitating these diplomatic requirements. Unmediated, informal channels of exchange with local stakeholders and understanding the sentiments of local populations could produce important information about political processes and events. In the best case it made politics less unpredictable and could as a well-informed report to Berlin prove advantageous in propelling a diplomatic career.

Rosen's prior exposure to the Persian language, his long service in Tehran and the sustained professional and personal relationships with Iranians came to make Iran and the Persian language central in his view of the Orient. At the bottom of short encounters and longer friendships was often a shared appreciation of poetry, questions of philosophy or an interest in history. Like their Levantine predecessors European dragomans and consuls were engaged in a “dialogical project that necessitated ongoing recalibrations of prior knowledge through a multiplicity of perspective, where diplomatic institutions and episte-

5 Elena Andreeva, *Russia and Iran in the Great Game. Travelogues and Orientalism* (London: Routledge, 2007), 2.

6 Such diplomats “of the second order”, as Berridge calls them, have been largely excluded in the study of the *Auswärtiges Amt*. Geoffrey R. Berridge, *Gerald Fitzmaurice (1865–1939), Chief Dragoman of the British Embassy in Turkey* (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff, 2007); Conze, *Das Auswärtige Amt*; Doß, “Deutsches diplomatisches Korps”.

mologies played a key role” for both politics and scholarship.⁷ Rosen continuously sought out sources and forums of knowledge, gathering bits of information, sometimes amounting to bodies of knowledge, that were more or less relevant to his official duties. Some sources were verbal, like a poetic line dropped in casual conversation. Others were in written form, like the manuscripts and books Rosen studied and acquired. Less consciously but as significant was his absorption of other elements of his environment, impressions and observations of events, circumstances and people, and an ever-expanding vocabulary. He put to use many of these elements of knowledge in acts of diplomacy or report writing, but did not immediately engage in any major way in scholarship that fed into European discourses. But the Iran and Middle East he lived in during the 1890s became under changed circumstances in subsequent decades a constant source of reference and inspiration for analysis and action in politics and academia.

Indispensable during Friedrich Rosen’s years of learning, studying and making a name for himself was his wife Nina. Rosen, like the Russian Iranist Valentin Zhukovskii in the 1880s, “benefited greatly from the fact that in Persia he stayed together with his wife... who not only accompanied him in all his trips but also helped in collecting folk material, especially in situations when only a woman could do so, like in the cases of collecting data from female informants.”⁸ Nina shared her husband’s desire to learn more about Iran, its people and music, participated in some of his research, engaged socially in diplomatic and royal circles and managed the household. After surviving the simultaneous contraction of smallpox and cholera in 1892, Nina gave birth to twins in Tehran in 1895: Oscar and Georg. Iran became part of the Rosen family history.

2 Languages and the Lower Ranks of Diplomacy

Friedrich Rosen’s first encounters with the Persian language had been through a number of texts under the aegis of his father Georg in Detmold. The study of his father’s *Elementa Persica*, which consisted of an explanation of the Persian grammar and script, short reading samples in Persian and a vocabulary, was

7 E. Natalie Rothman, “Dragomans and ‘Turkish Literature’: The Making of a Field of Inquiry,” *Oriente Moderno* 93 (2013): 390; Alexander de Groot, “The Changing National Character of the Dragoman (1756–1863),” in *Fremde Erfahrungen: Asiaten und Afrikaner in Deutschland, Österreich und in der Schweiz bis 1945*, Gerhard Höpp (Berlin: Das Arabische Buch, 1996), 297–317.

8 Firuza Abdullaeva, “Zhukovskii, Valentin Alekseevich,” *Encyclopædia Iranica*, 15 August 2009. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/zhukovskii-valentin-alekseevich>.

complemented by reading excerpts of Rumi's *Masnavi*, Sa'di's *Gulistan* and easier passages of Hafez.⁹ Although different in style from the Persian cursive, his practice of Arabic calligraphy as a child helped. A number of factors fed into Georg Rosen's Persophilia. Aside from personal affinity to the language in which he had first courted Serena, Persian enjoyed a reputation as a language of culture in Europe, served as a lingua franca from India to the Ottoman Empire and would open up career opportunities for his son Friedrich.¹⁰ Belatedly this calculation paid off with Friedrich using and improving his Persian abilities at the court of viceroy Dufferin, in the company of maharajas, booksellers and other masters of letters across northern India. After his return to Berlin his improved Persian and Hindustani skills were put to use in teaching at the fledgling Seminar für Orientalische Sprachen (SOS). Bismarck had had enough of not being able to communicate with envoys from the East, as Germany was beginning to develop economic, political and colonial interests around the world in the 1880s. Diplomats, merchants and colonialists should enter the extra-European world equipped with the necessary language skills.¹¹ At the SOS, Rosen became friends with Friedrich Carl Andreas (1846–1930), an Iranist scholar of Armenian-Malayan-German origin, who had spent a good decade working in Iran's postal service until the early 1880s. Along his postal routes Andreas studied old, middle and new Iranian languages to an in Europe rare level of perfection. Rosen continued to study Persian with Andreas and also sat in on Arabic and Turkish courses at the SOS.¹² A conflict with the director of the SOS, Eduard Sachau, over the balance of teaching and research led Andreas and Rosen to resign in 1889, and Rosen to seek a position in the foreign service.¹³

9 Georg Rosen, *Elementa Persica*. "Hekayat Parsi" [in Persian] id est narrationes Persicae (Berlin: Veith, 1843); Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 55; Friedrich Rosen, *Orientalische Erinnerungen*, 54.

10 Dabashi, *Persophilia*, 13–28; Fragner, *Persophonie*, 63–83; Friedrich Rosen, *Orientalische Erinnerungen*, 55.

11 Friedrich Rosen to Eduard Sachau, 18 August 1887, SOS, Rep. 208 A Nr 78, GStPK; Sachau, *Seminar für Orientalische Sprachen*, 55; Mangold, "Weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft", 226.

12 Friedrich Rosen to Eduard Sachau, 8 August 1887, SOS, Rep. 208 A Nr 78, GStPK; W. Lentz, D. N. MacKenzie, and B. Schlerath, "Andreas, Friedrich Carl. German Iranologist (1846–1930)," *Encyclopædia Iranica* Vol. II, no. 1 (1985): 27–30. Ursula Welsch and Dorothee Pfeiffer, *Lou Andreas-Salomé. Eine Bildbiographie* (Leipzig: Reclam, 2006), 66.

13 Marchand noted that the SOS was "characterized by rivalries among the faculty members and struggles over rank". Rosen complained vehemently to the Auswärtiges Amt about Sachau's treatment of staff. Later he and Andreas successfully sued the SOS for severance pay. Rosen cursed director Sachau and minister of culture and education Althoff as "scoundrels" and hoped that "Sachau wird den Weg aller Tapire (ad Latrinam) gehen." Sachau thought just as

Before joining the SOS Rosen had originally applied to work as an interpreter in Calcutta or Persia, but the Auswärtiges Amt preferred him to train interpreters in Berlin. In 1890 Rosen profited from Gottfried Wetzstein, the long-standing Prussian consul in Damascus and colleague of his father in the 1850s and 1860s, recommending him for the opening up dragoman position in Ottoman Beirut.¹⁴ The dragoman profession had come into existence in the eighteenth century, when travelling European embassies to Constantinople took on mostly Jews, Greek Orthodox and later Latinate Levantines to interpret and translate with the Sultan's court. As language and cultural intermediaries dragomans often wielded considerable power, tapping into European protection and the extraterritoriality provided by the capitulations. With their superior language skills dragomans often also made European diplomats – rarely conversant in Turkish, Arabic or Persian – dependant on their abilities in dealings with the Ottoman authorities. The Ottoman Tanzimat reforms in the 1860s changed the institution of the dragoman, as the number of dragoman staff per legation became limited. As a result more and more Europeans were trained as dragomans. Like their Levantine predecessors, some of whom became naturalised European citizens and continued working as dragomans or consuls, European dragomans were expected to be conversant in the relevant languages and interpret for their diplomatic chiefs, who mostly continued to lack such language skills. Moreover, dragomans should understand local customs, cultivate relations with important figures, and were tasked with translating official documents, carrying out consular administrative work, as well as contributing to diplomatic reporting.¹⁵ Speaking to the question, if the Persian and Hindustani teacher of the SOS would cope in Arabic-speaking Ottoman Beirut, the long-time dragoman in Beirut and Arabic

badly of Rosen. Martin Hartmann also hated Sachau and called him a “criminal” and “a representative of the evil principle” for forcing everyone “with talent to the wall.” Maximilian von Berchem, Note, 22 October 1889, I 19906, Personalakten 012577, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 7 February 1891, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Friedrich Rosen to Lou Andreas-Salomé, 9 July 1891, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Ludmila Hanisch, *Islamkunde und Islamwissenschaft im Deutschen Kaiserreich. Der Briefwechsel zwischen Carl Heinrich Becker und Martin Hartmann (1900–1918)*, (Leiden: Documentatiebureau Islam-Christendom, 1992), 18; Ludmila Hanisch, “Machen Sie doch unseren Islam nicht gar zu schlecht”. *Der Briefwechsel der Islamwissenschaftler Ignaz Goldziher und Martin Hartmann, 1894–1914* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2000), 255; Marchand, *German*, 354.

¹⁴ Gustav Humbert to Gerlich, 24 June 1887, I 10076, Personalakten 012577, PA AA; Lothar von Eichhorn to Friedrich Rosen, 4 March 1890, I 4153, Personalakten 012577, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Gottfried Wetzstein, 10 August 1890, 21, 1888 Darmstaedter 2b, StaBiB; Mangold, “*Weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft*”, 94; Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 87.

¹⁵ de Groot, “Changing National Character of the Dragoman.”

teacher at the SOS Martin Hartmann provided the Auswärtiges Amt with a second appraisal of Rosen: “Wie dies bei Kindern von Europäern, die im Orient geboren wurden und nicht in vollkommener Abgeschlossenheit von der einheimischen Bevölkerung aufgewachsen, die Regel ist: die dem Arabischen eigenthümlichen Laute spricht er mit großer Leichtigkeit und Deutlichkeit aus.” Although Rosen’s Persian was stronger, what he knew from his childhood in Jerusalem would be enough for Beirut, and his written Arabic would certainly improve with practice and his “eagerness” to learn.¹⁶

3 Beirut Prelude and a Horseback Journey across Iran

For the taste of Paul Schroeder, the German consul in Beirut, Rosen overdid it with the language studying. Schroeder, himself a Semitist, scholar of the Phoenician and Punic languages and a supporter of the faculty of Oriental studies at the Saint-Joseph University in Beirut, valued his dragoman for his quick improvements in Arabic, his “strength of will” and his “exemplary behaviour”. But in his reports back to Berlin he complained that Rosen lacked interest in the legal aspects of his consular work. A few months in, Schroeder reprimanded Rosen for not working more diligently on his consular tasks— leaving a “deep impression” with Rosen.¹⁷ Rosen later remembered a choleric but sympathetic chief, known among the Ottoman elites in Beirut as “küçük aslan” (little lion), who “knew Syria better than almost any other foreign resident”. Rosen added that Schroeder “had an agreeable way of initiating me into my new duties, which were neither difficult nor unpleasant”. After some months Rosen had picked up his slack and

16 “As is the rule with children of Europeans, who were born in the Orient and did not grow up in complete isolation from the indigenous population: the for Arabic peculiar tones he speaks with great ease and lucidity.” Martin Hartmann, *Einschätzung*, 17 October 1889, I 429, Personalakten 012577, PA AA; Martin Hartmann, *Arabischer Sprachführer für Reisende* (Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1881); L. Hanisch, *Briefwechsel Becker und Hartmann*, 15–17; Wokoeck, *German Orientalism*, 79; Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 356–57.

17 Friedrich Rosen, *Orientalische Erinnerungen*, 1926, ASWPC; E. A. Wallis Budge, *By Nile and Tigris. A Narrative of Journeys in Egypt and Mesopotamia on Behalf of the British Museum between the Years 1886 and 1913*. (London: John Murray, 1920), 159–60; Rafael Herzstein, “The Oriental Library and the Catholic Press at Saint-Joseph University in Beirut,” *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 2 (2015): 251; Paul Schroeder to Gustav Humbert, 13 January 1891, I 1749, Personalakten 012577, PA AA.

Schroeder reported to Berlin that Rosen had improved and was very valuable for the foreign service.¹⁸

Rosen's stint in Beirut was shorter than a year and did not see any major political developments in often tumultuous Lebanon. Apart from these issues of adjustment from scholarship to diplomacy, two episodes throw a light on Rosen's practice as a diplomat that would recur in the years to come. Coming with the recommendation of Lord Dufferin, Rosen and his London bred wife Nina stuck mostly with English circles around R.W. Brigstocke, James Page and the English consul Henry Trotter. Like his father before him, he also assisted scholars like the British Egyptologist E.A. Wallis Budge, who was touring Lebanon in search of manuscripts for the British Museum. German Beirut society was up in arms over Rosen's fraternisation with the English and complaints reached the *Auswärtiges Amt*. Schroeder absolved Rosen, as the Germans "almost did not entertain any conviviality" in the city. Keeping their distance from the German community was also a matter of class. The "German vagrants, who were at time roaming all of the Orient without any means" were not the preferred company of the Rosens. Schroeder's kavass Abdurrahman and Rosen condescendingly referred to the German supplicants at the consulate as "fakirs" (ascetics living on alms). The Rosens mingled only with the German Christian community during the later months of their stay in Beirut.¹⁹

Another instance prefiguring Rosen's later activities was a meeting with an Ottoman official, in which naval issues off the port of Beirut were discussed. When the Ottoman official realised that Rosen spoke Persian better than Turkish, the conversation took a detour to the delights of Persian poetry. After the business matter was resolved the two men entered the study of the Ottoman official and delved into his collection of Persian poetry, and Rosen emerged with a gift of an extract of the collection *Maqulat-o Andarz-ha* (sayings and advice) by the Sufi polemicist and Hanbali commentator of the Quran Abdullah Ansari from Herat (1006–1088). There it reads in Rosen's German translation:

"O Freund, betrachte das Lebenskapital als Gewinn,
und laß den Gehorsam des großen Gottes nicht aus dem Sinn.
Aus der Wissenschaft schmiede dir ein Schwert
und glaub nicht, das Lernen sei deiner nicht wert.

18 Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 91–92; Paul Schroeder to Gustav Humbert, 13 January 1891, I 1749, Personalakten 012577, PA AA.

19 Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Friedrich Rosen, 14 February 1891, Dufferin, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 91; Friedrich Rosen, *Orientalische Erinnerungen*, 22–23; Paul Schroeder to Gustav Humbert, 29 October 1890, I 19417, Personalakten 012577, PA AA; Abschiedsgedicht, March 1891, Card, ASWPC; Budge, *Nile and Tigris*, 159.

Suche Zuflucht vor deinen bösen Lüsten im Gebet.
 Habe jederzeit den Tod im Auge.
 Den Unwissenden betrachte nicht wie einen Lebenden.
 Gib deinen Begierden nicht nach.
 Trau nicht dem unwissenden Frömmeler.
 Die Selbsterkenntnis achte als ein köstliches Gut.
 Zu allen Dingen rufe des Allwahren Hülfe an.
 Hüte dich vor dem Feinde mit des Freundesmiene.
 Vom stolzen Thoren halte dich fern.
 Was du nicht selbst gehört und gesehen, das sag' nicht
 und suche deines Nächsten Schmach nicht.
 Sieh vielmehr auf die eigene Schuld!"

"O friend, regard the capital of life as a profit,
 and don't forget obedience to the great God.
 Forge yourself a sword from scholarship
 and do not believe you are unworthy of learning.
 Seek refuge from your evil lusts in prayer.
 Always have death in sight.
 The unknowledgeable don't regard as living.
 Don't give in to desires.
 Don't trust the unknowing bigot.
 Self-awareness esteem as a delicate good.
 For all things call on the help of the All True.
 Mind the enemy with the countenance of the friend.
 Stay away from the proud fool.
 What you have not heard and seen yourself, that don't say
 and don't seek your neighbour's humiliation.
 Rather look at your own guilt!"

Taking Ansari's advice to heart, the *Maqulat-o Andarz-ha* became the first collection of poems Rosen translated from Persian to German.²⁰

In Tehran the German dragoman, Hermann Frank, was suffering from health issues throughout 1890, which were exacerbated by the Iranian high-altitude climate. To relieve Frank, the *Auswärtiges Amt* arranged for a swap of dragomans between Tehran and Beirut in early 1891. Berlin thought that "Dr. Rosen should be a very suitable personality for the post of dragoman in Tehran", as he knew the language, had previously demonstrated his ability to deal with people there and was already acquainted with the German envoy to Persia, Gustav Schenck zu

²⁰ Suleiman Rosen, *Tarjemah Ash'ar Farsi Binyan Almani* [in Persian], notebook, 1890s, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 103; A.G. Ravan Farhadi, *Abdullah Ansari of Herat. An Early Sufi Master* (Richmond: Curzon, 1996), 99–112.

Schweinsberg.²¹ Schenck, who was only the second permanent German envoy to Persia, had first met the dragoman in the spring of 1887, when Rosen returned from India to Europe via Iran. Departing from Bombay onboard the steamship 'Java' on 6 April 1887, Rosen had travelled to Iran via Karachi, Muscat and Bahrain in the company of Fernand d'Orval, a French traveller, Abdur Rahim Hakim, an Indian doctor in the service of the British resident in Iran's main port city Bushehr, and an elephant that the British viceroy Lord Dufferin of India was sending to the Iranian Shah as a gift.²² Equipped with letters of introduction from the Indian viceroy, Rosen moved along the arteries of British India, being received in Muscat by the Sultan of Oman, Turki bin Said, and staying in Bushehr with the British resident Colonel Edward Ross. From Bushehr Rosen and d'Orval continued their journey in a caravan up the mountains to Shiraz, where they stayed with the local director of the Indo-European Telegraph Company, John Preece, and where Rosen visited the grave sites of the poets who had taught him their language: Hafiz and Sa'adi.

Arriving in Isfahan by chapar khana, the government run horseback postal system, Rosen and d'Orval were received by Masud Mirza Zill as-Sultan, the second son of the Iranian Shah Naser ed-Din, governor of most of southern Iran, and with 20,000 troops commander of the country's largest army. In a tent on the banks of the Zayandeh river the strongman took a keen interest in what Rosen could tell him about the latest developments in India and Europe. In Tehran Rosen stayed with the British envoy and relative of the Dufferins, Arthur Nicolson, on whose recommendation Rosen and d'Orval were granted an interview with Naser ed-Din Shah. This Rosen managed to conduct in Persian, though he found it "not so easy to comply with the exigencies of conventional court language ... as my recent conversations had been chiefly with muleteers and shopkeepers". Rosen felt humbled by the "dignity of [the Shah's] manner and his general knowledge".²³ The German envoy Schenck, himself not a Persian speaker, "took no offence" with Rosen staying in the British legation and was impressed with his ability to interact in the highest diplomatic and royal circles. In fact, Schenck had already then in 1887 given Rosen a letter of recommendation for

21 Adolf Marschall von Bieberstein to Paul Schroeder, 27 December 1890, I 20736, Personalakten 012577, PA AA; Paul Schroeder to Gustav Humbert, 13 January 1891, I 1749, Personalakten 012577, PA AA.

22 H. Lyman Stebbins, "British Imperialism, Regionalism, and Nationalism in Iran, 1890–1919," in *Iran Facing Others. Identity Boundaries in a Historical Perspective*, Abbas Amanat and Farzin Vejdani (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 151–67.

23 Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 43–76.

the German foreign service on account of his language abilities.²⁴ It had been this sort of private trip a few years earlier that in 1891 had Rosen moved to a position where he could make use of and improve his knowledge of Persian language and culture.

4 “Do you Speak Persian?” Nina and Friedrich Rosen in Tehran

Rosen arrived in Iran with his first work of knowledge production for Europeans on Persian complete. His *Shumā Fārsi hārf mizānid?* (*Sprechen Sie Persisch?*) had been published in Leipzig before he had parted for Beirut in 1890. Adapted to the needs of language students at the entry level he taught at the SOS, it included a grammar and vocabulary of contemporary Persian and a compilation of reading and conversation samples that Rosen had collected on his trip to Iran in 1887. The grammatical section was a more elaborate version of his father’s 1840s *Elementa Persica*, and the vocabulary was checked against the Persian-English dictionaries that had been coming out in England and India.²⁵ Connected to Rosen’s direct experience in Persia were compilations of Persian polite forms, such as “āsbāb-i zāhmāt-i shumā nā bāshād” (may it not be a cause for nuisance for you), enumerations of royal titles and dignitaries, like those used for addressing the Shah and the Zill as-Sultan, and excerpts of articles from the Isfahan newspaper *Farhang*.²⁶ One reading sample was of a conversation onboard a steamship between an experienced and a first-time traveller in the Persian Gulf. The former explained to the latter the route and modes of travel from Bombay to Tehran, sounding rather like a conversation that would have taken place between Rosen and the Bushehr based Abdur Rahim Hakim onboard the ‘Java’ in 1887. Rosen rounded off the study-book with a quaint didactic exercise of excerpts from Naser ed-Din Shah’s European travel diaries from 1873, including passages on the militarised education of Berlin’s children, the marvels of the Rhine river and the fairy-like spa town of Baden Baden.²⁷ Rosen noted that he had chosen the excerpts from the Shah’s diary because he had gotten the chance to person-

²⁴ Gustav Schenck zu Schweinsberg, Empfehlungsschreiben – Friedrich Rosen, 24 May 1887, I 10076, Personalakten 012577, PA AA; Gustav Humbert to Gerlich, 24 June 1887, I 10076, Personalakten 012577, PA AA.

²⁵ Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 8 October 1889, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Friedrich Rosen to Eduard Sachau, 18 August 1887, SOS, Rep. 208 A Nr 78, GStPK.

²⁶ Friedrich Rosen, *Neupersischer Sprachführer*, 48–97.

²⁷ Friedrich Rosen, *Neupersischer Sprachführer*, 146–51.

ally ascertain the currentness of the language in his conversation with the Shah.²⁸ Returning to Iran in 1891, Rosen would get the chance to test, apply and perfect the language he introduced in his travel self-study.



Fig. 3.1. “The German legation on a winter ride near Tehran”, c. 1892.

In Tehran the Rosens lived in walking distance to the British legation on ‘Ala ed-Dowleh street (today Firdowsi). The area stretching out into Shemiran north of Tehran was the modern and wealthy part of the capital, where Europeans resided, Qajar princes had their residences and gardens and house fronts often resembled those in Paris.²⁹ A twenty minute ride on Rosen’s Turkoman horse southwards lay the Gulestan palace of the Shah, and further downhill still the bazaar and the poorer and more traditional area of the city. The upgrade from consul’s to envoy’s dragoman resulted in an increase of Rosen’s monthly salary

²⁸ Friedrich Rosen, *Neupersischer Sprachführer*, IX.

²⁹ Rosen, *Persian Photographs*, 1890s, ASWPC.

from 325 to 800 Mark and the Rosens could now rent a house with a garden that was passed by a creek.³⁰

With the piano and the house library shipped in from Beirut, Nina arranged the Rosen household according to the requirements of etiquette and social standing. This could lead to conflicts with the landlord Nayab Hasan Ali Khan, who complained that the Rosens painted the walls in light and dark blue colours without permission, or put up a tent for entertainment in the garden contrary to the stipulations of the rental contract. Through the public display of leisure, the Rosens had on one occasion offended the neighbours during the religious festivities of Ashura, as Khan reprimanded his tenants.³¹ Generally though, Nina Rosen got along well with the neighbours and the landlord's wife Eissa Khan, who counselled her on how to move in the city and which places to avoid at times of commotion. Anxious over running the household, she wrote to Lou Andreas-Salomé, the wife of her husband's friend Friedrich Carl Andreas, that she worried if she could find a kitchen aid as "diligent and cleanly" as the girls she had employed in Berlin. In the years to come she arranged and oversaw large dinner parties for European and Iranian guests and took to cooking Persian dishes of chicken in pomegranate sauce.³²

Arriving in an environment first entirely foreign to her, she managed well. Making an effort to understand her new surroundings, she conscientiously learned Persian – with her husband's self-study and in conversation and writing with Eissa Khan and the women of Naser ed-Din Shah's court.³³ Nina developed relationships with the wives of her husband's interlocutors in the Qajar administration, such as Farrokh Khan Mohtaram Amin ed-Dowleh (her husband Amin ed-Dowleh II was the minister of post). But she was also friendly with Monir es-Saltaneh, the eighth wife of the Shah, who invited her to festivities in the harem on the occasion of the Prophet's daughter Fatimah's birthday, and with Anis ed-Dowleh, the most important wife of and de facto queen of Iran under Naser ed-Din Shah.³⁴ In some ways Nina had more access to Iranian society than Friedrich

30 Lothar von Eichhorn to Friedrich Rosen, 4 March 1890, I 4153, Personalakten 012577, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Leo von Caprivi, 18 February 1891, I 3930, Personalakten 012577, PA AA.

31 Nayab Hasan Ali Khan, Rental Contract, 1895, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Michael to Friedrich Rosen, 1892, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Eissa Khan to Nina Rosen, 1890s, Zettelkiste, ASWPC.

32 Nina Rosen to Lou Andreas-Salomé, 9 September 1891, 362 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Nina Rosen, Persisches Gericht, Zettelkiste, ASWPC.

33 Visiting his mother Serena in Paris in 1894, Friedrich proved to her that Nina had sufficiently mastered the Persian by writing a letter to her in that language, while Serena looked over his shoulder. Suleiman Rosen to Nina Rosen, 26 January 1894, Zettelkiste, ASWPC.

34 Eissa Khan to Nina Rosen, Letters, 1892, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Monir es-Saltaneh to Nina Rosen, 1890s, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Mohtaram ed-Dowleh to Nina Rosen, March 1896, Zettelkiste,

during those years. She was equally present at receptions of male Iranian figures and had no qualms complaining directly to Nasrullah Khan Moshir ed-Dowleh, the foreign minister at the time and a close acquaintance of her husband, when she perceived etiquette to have been broken.³⁵ Friedrich in contrast, would not come close to the *anduran*, the women's quarters, of his Iranian professional contacts and friends. When he was allowed to inquire after the health of his closest friend's wife, he considered it "a great favour, and a sign of unusual intimacy."³⁶



Fig. 3.2. A photograph of women and children at a meal in Tehran in the Rosen collection.

No surprise then that Rosen's *Oriental Memories* are interspersed with Nina's anecdotes. On the occasion of Nowruz (Iranian new year) Naser ed-Din Shah received the European women of the city to ceremoniously hand out gold tomans

ASWPC; Anis ed-Dowleh to Nina Rosen, June 1896, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Piotr Bachtin, "The Royal Harem of Naser al-Din Shah Qajar (r. 1848–1896): The Literary Portrayal of Women's Lives by Taj al-Saltana and Anonymous 'Lady from Kerman'," *Middle Eastern Studies* 51, no. 6 (2015): 986–1009.

³⁵ Nasrullah Khan Moshir ed-Dowleh to Nina Rosen, 1890s, Zettelkiste, ASWPC.

³⁶ Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 140.

(highest denomination of the Iranian currency). In a show of power, Ella Durand, the wife of the British envoy, had the court know in advance that she would refuse accepting money from the Shah. The Durands had been stationed in India before, where they learned that similar ceremonies signified allegiance and hierarchy. Durand did however inform the court that she would agree to being given a portrait of the Shah. Standing in the Gulestan palace's reception hall, Nina then observed how the Shah gave Durand a golden double toman, on one side minted with the Shah's portrait, saying "you cannot refuse to accept my portrait which is on this coin. You must keep it as a souvenir."³⁷ Nina and Friedrich would share these stories of their days and encounters – some surprising, funny or endearing, others sad or reprehensible. There is no evidence that Rosens were aware of the politics of the harem, but it stands to be reasoned that Friedrich took an interest in what Nina recounted of her experiences, whether for his diplomatic tasks, out of scholarly curiosity or simply as a husband listening to his wife.

As the daughter of Antonin Roche, "the eminent French examiner for the British Government", Nina also brought her own connections from London to bear in the Middle East, as people from her circles back home came to visit or were posted to Beirut, Tehran or Jerusalem as government representatives. In London she had studied music with her mother Emily, a student of Chopin, and at the National Training School of Music. Entertaining Tehran's European society on the piano with pieces of Bach, Chopin and Wagner, she also heard unfamiliar forms of music. Some of these melodies and harmonies, in which "the people" on the streets of Tehran sang poems by Hafez or the modern Iranian national anthem, she recorded on music sheets and made part of her repertoire.³⁸ Nina shared her husband's interest in understanding Iran and its people. Much of Friedrich's scholarly work ran by her for proofreading before publication and Nina enjoyed reading Persian manuscripts on her own. With Friedrich digging into history, philosophy and poetry in a predominantly male Iran, Nina connected with Iranian women and sought to understand Iran through music.³⁹

³⁷ The episode is confirmed in Ella Durand's memories of Persia, without the sore story of being duped by the Shah. Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 146; Ella R. Durand, *An Autumn Tour in Western Persia* (Westminster: Archibald Constable & Co, 1902), 43.

³⁸ Budge, *Nile and Tigris*, 159; Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 159; Nina Rosen, *Acht orientalische Weisen aus dem Munde des Volkes in Teheran und Fez aufgezeichnet und bearbeitet* (Hannover: Orient-Buchhandlung, 1926).

³⁹ Marie Dickens, *Mumsey's Recollections. Eighty-Four Years Ago* (London: Printed for Private Circulation, 1936), 53; von Urff, "Friedrich Rosen," 4.

A regional outbreak of the cholera in 1892 that killed every nine out of ten infected – 20,000 people in Tehran alone – also infected Nina.⁴⁰ Friedrich's brother Hareth, who was visiting at the time, noted that the neighbours of the Rosens gave into their fate: "Die Krankheit kommt von Gott und dauert so lange, bis Gott sie wieder fortnimmt".⁴¹ When the neighbours washed their dead in the creek passing through the Rosen garden, pleading and trying to explain to them the latest German discoveries about the spread of infectious diseases led to nothing, leading the "powerfully built" Rosen to threaten to "thrash" them – his threats apparently making enough of an impression. Under the care of Friedrich and Hareth, Nina survived. When she recuperated, Rosen began pleading with the Auswärtiges Amt for a posting closer to Europe on account of his wife's impaired health. After the birth of Georg and Oscar in 1895 Nina developed erysipelas, with abscesses all over her body. The boys weighing only three pounds each, "their father invented an incubator for them", Nina's sister Marie recorded. "He had a large red leather trunk in which he stood a pail of boiling water. The tray was put over it and the babes oiled, wrapped in cotton wool and soft blankets were kept warm. They were fed with drops of camomile tea and brandy, dropped into their mouth on a feather. They each had a native nurse and, as they grew stronger, were sent on to the garden roof."⁴²

Not only did in Osterhammel's words "hardly a diplomat push into diplomatic wastelands like Tehran", but as Robert Koch's discoveries of the spread of bacteria led to improving health and sanitation conditions in Europe a posting to places with worse conditions became even less appealing for diplomats with

⁴⁰ The cholera had arrived in Iran from India via Afghanistan. See Osterhammel for the spread of cholera and other infectious diseases in Europe and Asia and sanitary conditions only improving by the late nineteenth century worldwide. Osterhammel, *Verwandlung der Welt*, 284–87.

⁴¹ "The illness comes from God and lasts until God takes it away." On some days in August 1892 the French doctor of the Shah, Feuvrier, counted 800 dead in Tehran alone. Feuvrier described that the washing of dead bodies in the creeks of the uphill villages of Tajrish and Shemiran resulted in the transportation of the virus to downhill Tehran. Rosen wrote Andreas that the scale of the cholera outbreak was underreported in the European press, so as to not endanger foreign investments. Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 16 September 1892, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 6 September 1892, A 21, R 19021, PA AA; Jean-Baptiste Feuvrier, *Trois Ans à la Cour de Perse* (Paris: F. Juven, 1900), 406–11; Hareth Rosen, Bericht über meine Reise nach Persien zu Verfügung der Königlichen Kriegs-Akademie. No 3/4, 3 March 1892, ASWPC.

⁴² Before penicillin became available in the 1930s severe cases of erysipelas often led to death. Dickens, *Mumsey's Recollections*, 51; Gertrude Bell to Florence Bell, 11 May 1896, GBA NU; "Erysipelas. Infection," in *Encyclopædia Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/science/erysipelas>.

family.⁴³ Despite the name Friedrich Rosen appearing on diplomatic cables and scholarly publications, the Rosens led a co-dependant relationship. Friedrich would not have sent the well-informed reports to Berlin, advanced in his career or got the leisure time to study without Nina having had his back. Conversely, this meant that after Nina suffered from repeated illness and gave birth to their twin sons under severe circumstances Friedrich requested a diplomatic placement closer to medically more advanced Europe.⁴⁴

5 Iranian Society and Politics

The German envoy Schenck was rather ignorant when it came to Iranian mores, and Rosen would, when he thought it prudent, deliberately misinterpret Schenck's utterances in the presence of Iranian officials to prevent scandal. On one occasion Schenck wanted to invite finance minister Mirza Esmail Amin al-Molk to a European ball, where men were to dance with women. Rosen had the pious Amin al-Molk know that the German envoy was praying for his health. Nevertheless, Rosen and Schenck worked well together. The daily schedule of the envoy and his dragoman was separated into paperwork in the mornings and in the afternoons riding out, socialising with the members of the British legation over a match of tennis, or meeting with Iranian officials. Rosen improved on his bureaucratic performance. His skills were "entirely" to the Schenck's satisfaction, so that he could recommend to the *Auswärtiges Amt* in the fall of 1891 that Rosen's erstwhile temporary dragoman contract should be made permanent.⁴⁵

A few months later Rosen was left as *chargé d'affaires* in Tehran, when Schenck went on home leave in the summer of 1892. Schenck was subsequently posted to Beijing and the position of envoy in Tehran was not filled again until the fall of 1893.⁴⁶ As the highest ranking German official in Iran during those sixteen months Rosen enjoyed his rise in status in Tehran society, going alone to audiences of various ministers and officials. He also enjoyed the new-gained autonomy resulting in a decreased work-load as he no longer had to interpret for

⁴³ Osterhammel, *Verwandlung der Welt*, 716, 284.

⁴⁴ Friedrich Rosen to Gustav Schenck zu Schweinsberg, 31 January 1893, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen to Chlodwig zu Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 20 July 1897, 18091, Personalakten 012577, PA AA.

⁴⁵ Gustav Schenck zu Schweinsberg to Leo von Caprivi, 26 October 1891, I 21745, Personalakten 012577, PA AA; Gustav Schenck zu Schweinsberg to Leo von Caprivi, 8 April 1892, I 8583, Personalakten 012577, PA AA.

⁴⁶ *Berliner Fremdenblatt*, 3 September 1892.

his chief and translate letters and official documents coming in and going out. Report writing, consular and other administrative tasks were done more quickly in the mornings, and afternoons and evenings were spent by Rosen as he pleased, mostly seeking out European diplomats and Iranian officials – professionally and socially.⁴⁷

Most important among them was Mirza Ali Asghar Khan Amin as-Sultan, the Iranian Sadr Azam (grand vezir) and main power broker for the last decade of Naser ed-Din Shah's nearly fifty years of reign from 1848 to 1896. Reflected in the rising influence of the respective envoys in Tehran, the 1890s were marked by the increasingly overwhelming Russian and British pressure on the political, territorial and financial integrity of Iran. Simultaneously, the Shah's court came under pressure from liberal and nationalist modernists and religious sectors of society, who opposed the foreign dominance, eventually culminating in the Shah's assassination by Mirza Reza Kermani, a disciple of the pan-Islamic modernist and anti-imperialist Jamal ad Din Asadabadi al-Afghani, in 1896. The Russo-British rivalry over supreme influence in Tehran continued during the discordant and short-lived reigns of Naser ed-Din's successors.⁴⁸ With short interruptions Amin as-Sultan stayed at the helm of Iranian politics in this violent transition from unchecked royalty to constitutional parliamentarianism until his own assassination on the day of the Anglo-Russian convention in 1907, which officially established Russian and British zones of influence in Iran.

By many "considered as the main cause of the evils befalling Iran in the late Qajar period" for his manoeuvring between all sides, Rosen found pleasure in the refined manners of the well-educated and charitable Amin as-Sultan. Like Rosen, Amin as-Sultan had not been born into nobility but had "diligently", as Rosen's brother Hareth noted, worked himself into a position of power, despite constant accosting by the Shah's sons and other fractions of the Qajar dynasty.⁴⁹ Reza Khan 'Arfa ed-Dowleh, another non-noble member of the Iranian elite at the time, observed his protector Amin as-Sultan to be fond of the pleasures of feasting, poetry and scholarship, but also fearful of the religious dictates of

⁴⁷ Friedrich Rosen, 1926, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte I*, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 42; Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 158.

⁴⁸ *Vossische Zeitung*, 25 June 1892; Firuz Kazemzadeh, *Russia and Britain in Persia. Imperial Ambitions in Qajar Iran* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013).

⁴⁹ J. Calmard, "Atābak-e A'ẓam, Amīn-al-Solṭān," *Encyclopædia Iranica* II, no. 8 (2011): 878–90; Hareth Rosen, "Bericht über meine Reise nach Persien," 116.

the Shi'ite clergy, organising large rowzeh-khwani (religious discourses) during Ashura in his palace garden.⁵⁰

Sometimes Amin as-Sultan specifically invited Rosen to dinners and asked him to bring Nina along, but mostly Rosen frequented Amin as-Sultan's evening receptions, when scholars, government officials and foreigners were received by the Sadr Azam.⁵¹ The affairs discussed at these receptions were plenty: In late 1891 the tobacco concession given by the Shah and Amin as-Sultan to the British in exchange for a massive loan resulted in religiously sanctioned opposition to tobacco smoking. The resulting riots were only suppressed by the Sadr Azam after meeting and paying off the local religious leader Hasan Ashtiani and cancelling the concession.⁵² To service the indemnities claimed by the British, Iran had to borrow money from the Russians, marking the point in which Amin as-Sultan turned from relying on the British to leaning more on the Russians.⁵³

There was more unrest as Iranian political authority disintegrated. In the late summer of 1892, the city of Asterabad on the Turkoman border in the north-east of Iran saw a religiously motivated uprising, which was put down by Russian Cossack brigades without the central Iranian government being in a position to establish its own authority. A governmental crisis erupted in the winter of 1892/3 when Amin as-Sultan's position was challenged by two sons of the Shah. The war minister, Kamran Mirza Naib as-Saltaneh, and the governor of Fars, Zill as-Sultan, the previous strongman of southern Iran and "an enthusiastic admirer of Germany and its armies" thought the time was ripe to take over. There had been a foiled attempt on the Shah's life in late 1892 and Zill as-Sultan had come to Tehran to position himself in case of his father's death. Still remembering Rosen from his visit in 1887, Zill as-Sultan sought the support of the German chargé d'affaires, but his overtures went unanswered.⁵⁴ Rosen wit-

50 Prince Arfa', *Memories of a Bygone Age. Qajar Persia and Imperial Russia 1853–1902*, trans. and ed. Michael Noël-Clarke (London: Gingko Library, 2016), 214.

51 Amin as-Sultan to Friedrich Rosen, May 1890s, ASWPC.

52 Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 2 November 1892, A 28, R 18984, PA AA; "Troubles in Persia," *Times*, 10 November 1892; Hamid Algar, "Āštiānī, Ḥasan," *Encyclopædia Iranica* II, no. 8 (2011): 849–50; Hamid Algar, "Širāzi, Ḥasan," *Encyclopædia Iranica* XII, no. 1 (2012): 37–40.d.

53 Nikki R. Keddie, *Religion and Rebellion in Iran: The Iranian Tobacco Protest of 1891–1982* (New York: Frank Cass & Co, 1966); Kazemzadeh, *Russia and Britain in Persia*, 255.

54 Zill as-Sultan tried to procure military trainers through Rosen. Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 13 January 1893, A 1, R 19071, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 28 January 1893, A3, R 19071, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 17 February 1893, A 7, R 19033, PA AA; Heidi Walcher, "Kāmran Mirzā Nāyeb-Al-Saltāna," *Encyclopædia Iranica*, 29 October 2015. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/kamran-mirza-nayeb-al-saltana>; Valentine Chirol, *Fifty Years in a Changing World*. (London: Jonathan Cape, 1927), 151.

nessed the eventual strengthening of Amin as-Sultan's position in the spring of 1893 after the Sadr Azam had fought off his challengers. The reports sent back to Berlin do not show if Rosen played any further role in this affair.

Other topics of discussion between Rosen and the Sadr Azam included plans for military reform, which the war minister Naib as-Saltaneh blocked, preparations of Naser ed-Din's fiftieth throne jubilee and infrastructure projects pursued by Russian and English investors in the country that the diplomatic representatives backed to increase political influence and check the advances of the other side.⁵⁵ Engulfed by these wheelings and dealings, Rosen often saw the Iranian government as "fearful" and the Sadr Azam as "overwhelmed", but he also perceived of Amin as-Sultan as the only person "not blinded" as to the need of financial, administrative and military reform, but struggling against the odds of Russo-British penetration, financial malaise, bureaucratic shortcomings of a feudal state, court infighting and religiously inspired opposition to reforms. In a report Hareth Rosen wrote for the Prussian military academy, he noted on Amin as-Sultan: "Er ist auch der einzige persische Staatsmann, welcher sieht, daß es mit der nationalen Unabhängigkeit seines Landes bald zu Ende gehen muß, und der dies verhindern möchte".⁵⁶ For the friend of the arts and poetry Amin as-Sultan the same-aged German, who expressed an interest in the culture of his country rather than its subjugation, made for a congenial partner in the snake pit of Tehran's politics. Their relationship – or friendship as Rosen characterised it – made strategic sense. Both gained a sympathetic source of information, and amid the absence of an active German policy of involvement the lone German representative posed little danger to Iranian interests.

Whatever information of the goings-on of the court and ministries Rosen did not collect at receptions or other social functions, Haji Mirza Reza Khan provided. Reza Khan, employed as munshi (secretary) by the German legation since its establishment in 1885, fed Rosen with detailed information over who was coming and going at court, including people Rosen knew personally, such as Amin ed-Dowleh, Amin as-Sultan. Often Reza Khan would merely sit in the reception halls of Iranian grandees and listen in on circulating rumours.⁵⁷ He

⁵⁵ Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 4 October 1892, 8948, R 18984, PA AA; Nikolaus von Wallwitz, Bericht, 16 November 1893, A 37, R 19022, PA AA; Naser ed-Din Shah and Amin as-Sultan to Friedrich Rosen, May 1896, Zetteltiste, ASWPC.

⁵⁶ "He is also the only Persian statesman, who sees that it must end soon with the independence of his country and who seeks to forestall this." Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 9 November 1894, No 67, R 19033, PA AA.

⁵⁷ In 1902 Reza Khan was awarded the Prussian Roter Adler Orden Third Class in recognition of his long-standing services for Germany. 'Ali Khan Qajar Zahir ed-Dowleh, *Khāterāt va Asnād-e*

also ran errands, delivered messages to ministers and the Sadr Azam, and bought books for Rosen. Reza Khan was also the ears and eyes of Rosen, when he was himself not in Tehran but up in the Elburz mountains with the retinue of the shah or at the country house of an Iranian grandee. The date of the execution of the Naser ed-Din Shah's assassin Mirza Reza Kermani was only one of the major events he scribbled on the back of his carte de visite and had brought up north to Rosen.

During the year and a half of being chargé d'affaires, Rosen had little use for Reza Khan's services as a Persian scribe, but continued to pay him for his informant activities. Taking advantage of the repeated shortage of cash coffers of the Iranian court, it was common for foreign diplomats to pay for information. Occasionally Rosen struggled with making his payments for the extra services and Reza Khan had to send reminders.⁵⁸ Rosen's annual salary had marginally increased after his first year in Tehran, but the foreign office's allocation of resources did not allow large bribes. Paying Reza Khan for his services as an informant, rather than for secretarial work, was a rather cost effective way for improving information influx. Their deal continued after Rosen had been moved back to dragoman's post and Reza Khan reinstated in his role as munshi, the added channel of information contributing to Rosen's strong position vis-a-vis his subsequent chiefs Nikolaus von Wallwitz and Günther von Gaertner-Griebenow.⁵⁹

Although not a bank holiday, "Kaisers Geburtstag" was widely celebrated in the German public, schools, army and various German state administrations. On the occasion of Kaiser Wilhelm II's birthday on 27 January 1893 the leading story of the East-Prussian *Thorner Presse* postulated:

Die Nationalhymne ertönt morgen in allen Theilen des deutschen Landes... [um den] thatkräftige Kaiser Wilhelm II. [zu feiern], der mit aufmerksamen, verständnisvollem Blick die Bedürfnisse und Aufgaben unserer Zeit überschaut und unablässig an der Lösung dieser Aufgaben arbeitet, zum Heile des Vaterlandes nicht nur, sondern zum Heile der Menschheit.⁶⁰

Zahir-al-Dowleh. Memoirs and Documents of Zahir-al-Dowleh, Iraj Afshar (Tehran: Intisharat-i Zarrin, 1988), 6; Richard von Kühlmann to AA, 7 April 1902, 23, R 131735, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, 1926, Hinterlassene Manuskripte I, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 42.

⁵⁸ Haji Mirza Reza Khan to Friedrich Rosen, 1890s, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Haji Mirza Reza Khan to Friedrich Rosen, 10 August 1896, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Haji Mirza Reza Khan to Friedrich Rosen, 1890s, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Haji Mirza Reza Khan to Friedrich Rosen, March 1893, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Prince Arfa', *Qajar Persia and Imperial Russia*, 222.

⁵⁹ Friedrich Rosen, 1926, Hinterlassene Manuskripte I, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 46.

⁶⁰ "Tomorrow, the national anthem will ring out in all parts of the German land... to celebrate the thoroughgoing Kaiser Wilhelm II, who with attentive and understanding eye overlooks the

The Auswärtiges Amt was no exception and Wilhelm's thirty-fourth birthday was also marked by the German legation in Tehran. Several weeks before, Rosen had sent out twenty-five invitations to ministers, members of Iranian society and a couple of Germans in the city to participate in a feast on the occasion of the monarch's birthday. The dining hall of the Rosen house had been prepared, Nina and Friedrich sitting in the middle of a long table facing each other, with the higher ranked guests seated close to the hosts, the furthest away the two German guests on the side far from the fireplace. Although a frequent guest of meals with Iranian friends and a savourer of Iranian cuisine, on this occasion Rosen did not serve dinner according to Iranian customs, such as all dishes being served at the same time to hosts and guests sitting on the floor, but similar to grand occasions at the houses of Amin-as Sultan and the war minister Naib as-Saltaneh: a multi-course French-style menu was served to the party sitting on chairs around a long table.⁶¹ Not quite as elaborate as the stately dinners at the war minister's house, or the new Shah Mozaffar ed-Din's first dinner in September 1896, the Rosens served a twelve course meal, which conformed to the Tehran diplomatic food etiquette of the day: French "côtelettes de poulets aux petit pois", followed by pilaf and some Iranian bread and cheese.⁶²

While the birthday of the Kaiser was the occasion, it became a party of celebrating Amin as-Sultan's promotion from Sadr Azam to Atabeg Azam, in a sign of the Shah's affirmation of his status, after his challengers had been defeated that winter. In suitable evening attire, seated on Nina Rosen's right, Amin as-Sultan was in equally as good a mood as the brothers of the Shah, Abbas Mirza Molk 'Ara and Abdus Samed Mirza 'Izz ed-Dowleh, the finance minister Amin al-Molk, the master of ceremonies at court Zahir ed-Dowleh, the justice minister Mohsin Khan, the foreign minister Nasrullah Khan Moshir ed-Dowleh, the royal secretary and renown liberal Mirza Ali Khan Amin ed-Dowleh, and Mehdi Qoli Khan Qajar Qoyunli Majd ed-Dowleh, a teacher of German at the western-oriented Dar al-Fonun school and consultant to Germans in Iran.⁶³

needs and tasks of our time and ceaselessly works on solving these tasks, not only for the salvation of our fatherland but for the salvation of mankind." "Kaisers Geburtstag," *Thorner Presse* 23 (27 January 1893): 1.

⁶¹ Friedrich Rosen, Seating Arrangement, January 1893, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 57.

⁶² Rosen found Iranian cuisine "à la hauteur des meilleurs dîners de Paris". Rosen, Menu du 27 janvier 1892, 27 January 1892, ASWPC; Naib as-Saltaneh, Diner Menu Eminieh, April 1892, ASWPC; "Diner du 14 Sept. 96," 14 September 1896, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Menu for Amir Kabir, 1890s, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 135–36.

⁶³ Ali Barzegar, "Mehdi Qoli Hedayat: A Conservative of the Late Qajar Era," *Iranian Studies* 20, no. 1 (1987): 55–76; Friedrich Rosen, Seating Arrangement, January 1893, Zettelkiste, ASWPC;

While the brothers of the Shah, Molk 'Ara and 'Izz ed-Dowleh, paid a courtesy visit to the Rosens and did not belong to their usual circles, the foreign minister was a frequent interlocutor of Rosen, the two men exchanging books.⁶⁴ The finance minister Amin al-Molk also did not belong to the close relations of the Rosens, but was a professional contact who provided Rosen with a copy of the Perso-French excavation convention of 1895.⁶⁵ Seated further away from the hosting couple were Amin ed-Dowleh and Mohsin Khan. Rosen had met Mohsin Khan in Constantinople in 1890, when they had chatted about Persian poetry and on one occasion, as Rosen fondly remembered in later years, Rosen peeled potatoes as Mohsin Khan chopped sabzi (spices) for a meal they were cooking in the justice minister's garden in Tehran. As extraordinary as this male bonding over preparing a meal was for Rosen, in Iran it was not unusual at the time for men to do the cooking in the household.⁶⁶ Another close relation was Amin ed-Dowleh, who would in 1896 succeed Amin as-Sultan as Sadr Azam for two years and in 1897 founded Anjoman-e Ma'aref, a society aimed at "awakening" society and spreading education. Rosen stayed at his countryside property in 1895, and Nina was acquainted with his wife Mohtaram ed-Dowleh.⁶⁷

Amin ed-Dowleh and Amin as-Sultan had been at loggerheads over the tobacco concession a year before and would clash again in later years, but momentarily celebrating the German emperor together was fine. Next to the previous foreign minister Qawam ed-Dowleh and the court chronicler E'temad as-Saltaneh, who excused themselves – neither appears to have cultivated relations with the Germans in Tehran – the just defeated Naib as-Saltaneh had also little desire to celebrate his adversary's victory and did not show up. Nevertheless, Rosen's relations with the war minister were cordial, the war minister regularly inviting Rosen to his fantastical gardens at Kamramieh to celebrate the Shah's birthdays and Rosen giving him his *Shūmā Fārsi hārf mizānid?* as a gift.⁶⁸

Ala al-Mulk 'Izz ed-Dowleh to Friedrich Rosen, January 1893, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Nasrullah Khan Moshir ed-Dowleh to Friedrich Rosen, January 1893, Zettelkiste, ASWPC.

64 Nasrullah Khan Moshir ed-Dowleh to Friedrich Rosen, 1896, Zettelkiste, ASWPC.

65 Amin al-Molk, *Antiquities Treaty between Mehrzad Azam and France*, 1895, Zettelkiste, ASWPC.

66 Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 110–11; Wipert von Blücher, *Zeitenwende in Iran. Erlebnisse und Beobachtungen* (Biberach: Koehler & Voigtländer, 1949), 209.

67 Hamid Algar, "Anjoman (Organization)," *Encyclopædia Iranica* XII, no. 1 (20 March 2012): 37–40; Mohtaram ed-Dowleh to Nina Rosen, March 1896, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Amin ed-Dowleh to Friedrich Rosen, 27 February 1895, ASWPC.

68 Friedrich Rosen to Amir Kabir Kamran Mirza Naib Saltaneh, 1890s, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Naib as-Saltaneh to Friedrich Rosen, April 1896, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Naib as-Saltaneh to Friedrich Rosen, September 1891, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Rosen, *Persian Photographs*, 1890s, ASWPC.

Struggling to find the appropriate words for the elevated company of Qajar royalty during his first visit in 1887, by 1893 Rosen had improved his Persian skills to the point that he could entertain a predominantly Iranian society of high standing. As the governor of many provinces Mohammed Hossein Mirza Badi' al Molk 'Emad ed-Dowleh had written him in a hagiographic poem in Persian after an evening spent together in 1892, he and his friends regarded Rosen as a "highly esteemed philosopher" who was in their company "the centre, emanating rays of light into the surrounding circle".⁶⁹ Rosen had mastered sufficiently Persian. Observing customs and polite forms, without neglecting his official duties or German heritage together with Nina, he entertained a circle of Iranian royalty and officials, chit-chatting away in a Perso-German evening of fun. Was Kaiser's anthem *Heil Dir im Siegerkranz* sung that evening? It was, in any case, the victory of Amin as-Sultan that was celebrated and Rosen was pleased to inform his absent chief Schenck that the dinner had passed "fully normal" and in "cheerful atmosphere". The next morning, Rosen reported the freshest political news to Berlin.⁷⁰

Sitting two chairs over from Rosen at the birthday party was the master of ceremonies of the Shah's court, 'Ali Khan Qajar Zahir ed-Dowleh. Zahir ed-Dowleh had helped Rosen with sending out the invitations to the members of court and became Rosen's closest Iranian friend in Tehran. Under the name Safa 'Ali Shah, Zahir ed-Dowleh's Sufi sobriquet, he initiated Rosen into the teachings and practices of the Ni'matullahi order's branch under the leadership of the "illustrious and anti-conformist" last major Iranian Sufi, Safi 'Ali Shah.⁷¹ In the late eighteenth century, the reign of the Qajar dynasty had welcomed, as Green noted, "an important revival in the fortunes of Sufism in Iran after a long period of state-sponsored suppression of Sufi masters and their followers".⁷² The largest

⁶⁹ Mohammad Hossein Mirza 'Emad ed-Dowleh to Friedrich Rosen, 1892, Zettelkiste, ASWPC.

⁷⁰ Friedrich Rosen to Gustav Schenck zu Schweinsberg, 31 January 1893, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 28 January 1893, A 3, R 19081, PA AA.

⁷¹ Friedrich Rosen to Zahir ed-Dowleh, January 1893, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Zahir ed-Dowleh to Friedrich Rosen, December 1892, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen, Seating Arrangement, January 1893, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Thierry Zarcone, *Secret et sociétés secrètes en Islam. Turquie, Iran et Asie centrale. XIXc–XXc siècles. Franc-Maçonnerie, Carboneria et Confréries soufies* (Milan: Archè, 2002), 155.

⁷² Suppression and persecution of Sufi orders had started during the later Safavid dynasty in the early seventeenth century. Nile Green, "A Persian Sufi in the Age of Printing: Mirza Hasan Safi 'Ali Shah (1835–99)," in *Religion and Politics in Modern Iran: A Reader*, Lloyd Ridgeon (London: I.B.Tauris, 2005), 99; Sajjad Rizvi, "A Sufi Theology Fit for a Shā'i King: The *Gawhar-i Murād* of 'Abd al-Razzāq Lāhijī (d.1072/1661–2)," in *Sufism and Theology*, Ayman Shihadeh (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 83–85; Mangol Bayat, "Anti-Sufism in Qajar Iran," in *Islamic*

of three Sufi orders in Iran in Rosen's time was the Ni'matullahi order, named after the fourteenth to fifteenth century Shah Ni'matullah Vali, a mystical poet and disciple of the teachings of the Andalusian Sufi master Ibn 'Arabi (1165–1240). Returning to Iran from a two-hundred year exile in India in the early nineteenth century the Ni'matullahi order found, despite initially violent opposition by 'ulema, significant missionary success, particularly in the southern and western Iranian cities of Kerman, Isfahan, Shiraz and Hamadan.⁷³

Safi 'Ali Shah was born in 1835 as Mirza Hasan Isfahani to a merchant family in Isfahan and became at a young age a follower of the pir (spiritual guide) of the Ni'matullahi order of Rahmat 'Ali Shah. Safi 'Ali Shah spent a good part of the 1860s in India, where he befriended Agha Khan Mahallati (the spiritual leader of the Isma'ili community) and travelled the wider Middle East on a pilgrimage to Mecca. His *Zubdat al-Asrar* (The Essence of Secrets), printed in Bombay in 1872, established Safi's reputation as a poet as far as Baghdad. Failing to gain the hoped for patronage of the Nizam of Hyderabad, he returned to Iran. Safi settled in Tehran, soon drawing a large following among the higher classes of the city's society. Under the influence of Rumi's *Masnavi* and al-Arabi, he wrote collections of mystical prose. His masterpiece *'Erfaan al-Haqq* (The Gnosis of Reality) was a versified exegesis of the Quran in over 32,000 rhyming couplets. Written in Persian to make religious texts more accessible to Iranians, it was seen as marvellous and novel by some. Others derided Safi for undermining orthodox Islam by writing on the Quran in Persian poetic style rather than in Arabic and called for his expulsion from Iran.⁷⁴

Safi 'Ali Shah's teachings of spirituality emphasised learning and knowledge, responsibility for one's own actions, philanthropy and charity, and Safi posited that the prophet Muhammad had aimed at "the progress and advancement of mankind." The proliferation of Safi 'Ali Shah's works through the novel printing technology further advanced Safi 'Ali Shah's appeal, whose teach-

Mysticism Contested. Thirteen Centuries of Controversies and Polemics (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 627–29.

⁷³ Leonard Lewisohn, "An Introduction to the History of Modern Persian Sufism, Part I: The Ni'matullāhi Order: Persecution, Revival, Schism," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 61, no. 3 (1998): 437–64; Nile Green, "Sufis in the Cosmopolitan Western Indian Ocean"; N. Hanif, *Biographical Encyclopaedia of Sufis: Central Asia and Middle East* (Delhi: Sarup & Sons, 2002), 4–7; Richard Gramlich, *Die Affiliationen. Die schiitischen Derwischorden Persiens* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1965), 90–91.

⁷⁴ Lewisohn, "Ni'matullāhi Order," 454; Nile Green, *Bombay Islam. The Religious Economy of the West Indian Ocean, 1840–1915* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 149–50; Nile Green, "Travels of Šafi 'Ali Shāh," 100; Hanif, *Biographical Encyclopaedia of Sufis*, 7; Zarccone, *Sociétés secrètes*, 156.

ings, Green argues, show “traces of Islamic modernism engulfed within a mystical reading of Islam”.⁷⁵ The reformist philosophy attracted a number of members from the Qajar court to Safi’s branch of the Ni’matullahi order in Tehran. In 1877 the Shah had his master of ceremonies Zahir ed-Dowleh check up on the rising spiritual star – thus bringing Safi ‘Ali Shah a new disciple. Taking the Sufi name Safa ‘Ali Shah, Zahir ed-Dowleh quickly advanced along the stages of Sufi practices and spirituality and moved to the inner circle of the Safi ‘Ali Shahiyya branch of the Ni’matullahi order.⁷⁶

The “somewhat aristocratic complexion to the Safi Ali-Shahiyya” despite its social reformist message was epitomised by Zahir ed-Dowleh, whom the later British viceroy in India George Curzon had characterised as “a young man of magnificent stature and singular handsome countenance... Clothed in a resplendent white frock coat and trousers beneath his Kashmir robe of state; a jewelled sword hanging from his side; a portrait of the Shah set in diamonds depended from his neck”.⁷⁷ It was through this silk rather than wool Sufi that Rosen was inducted to Safi ‘Ali Shah’s Sufi teachings. Rosen found that “in those days Sufism ruled in the circles of the educated in Persia, and particularly the higher placed claimed derwishdom for themselves with pride.”⁷⁸ When Zahir ed-Dowleh, who communicated with Rosen under his Sufi name Safa, asked Rosen to join the order, Rosen “pointed out to him that it was out of the question that I should abandon my Christian creed. [He] answered that it was not the creed but the state of one’s mind that made one fit to be a dervish.”⁷⁹ While the two men of roughly the same age became tied by spirituality, reflective of Safi’s teachings theirs was equally a friendship of learning. Safa wrote poetry on the mystic relationship between *zahir* (the external) and *baten* (the internal).

75 Nile Green, “Safi ‘Ali Shah,” 100–110G.

76 Although it came to a split between Safi ‘Ali Shah and two other leaders of the Ni’matullahi order after the death of Rahmat ‘Ali Shah, Safi ‘Ali Shah did not establish his own silsila, or chain of spiritual genealogy, but rather claimed “independence”. Zarcone, *Sociétés secrètes*, 155; Lewisohn, “Ni’matullāhi Order,” 455; Ridgeon, “Zahir al-Dowleh’s Contribution,” 148–49; Hanif, *Biographical Encyclopaedia of Sufis*, 7.

77 Zarcone, *Sociétés secrètes*, 156; George Nathaniel Curzon, *Persia and the Persian Question* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1892), 324.

78 Rosen quoted Rumi to illustrate that a Sufi – often associated with the Arabic for wool, *suf* – does not need to wear the woolen frock of poverty: “Das Sufitum liegt nicht im wollnen Rocke; kleide – Dich wie du willst, es gibt auch Derwische in Seide.” Georg Rosen and Friedrich Rosen, *Mesnevi oder Doppelverse des Scheich Mewlānā Dschelāl ed dīn Rūmi* (Munich: Georg Müller, 1913), 6.

79 Rosen described the order’s first principle to be “absolute toleration of other creeds”. Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 136–37.

They pondered philosophical matters, drawing on the vast manuscript collection in Safa 'Ali Shah's house, and discussed ideas and texts that Rosen had brought with him from his studies in Europe. Safa and his friends portrayed a keen interest in these European concepts, but as Rosen noted "they mostly found them too matter of fact, and too materialistic."⁸⁰

Beyond the spiritual and philosophical their friendship was mostly casual. Zahir ed-Dowleh was a patron of the arts and at his house Rosen enjoyed evenings of dance and music, performed by hired groups.⁸¹ Friedrich and Nina broke the fast during Ramadan at the house of Zahir ed-Dowleh, with Nina going to the women's quarters and dining with his wife Forough ed-Dowleh.⁸² Rosen was friendly with Safa's son, Zahir al-Molk, who would become a ringleader of the Constitutional Revolution in later years. They also shared medical services. When after the cholera outbreak in 1892 the German doctor, Oscar Müller, was sent to Tehran by the German government, Rosen made Müller available to Zahir ed-Dowleh and his circles.⁸³ On one occasion Safa took Rosen into the shrine of Shah 'Abdul 'Azim⁸⁴ a few miles outside of Tehran, where, as Rosen believed, "no Christian had ever penetrated". As two clerics guided Rosen and Safa by hand in circumambulating the sarcophagus, Rosen grew wary of his appearance betraying his non-Muslim identity. Following Safa's instructions, Rosen loudly repeated the chants of the clerics in Arabic and Persian, dispelling the suspicions of onlookers. Safa had his friend know afterwards that the men would have shred him to pieces, had they known that he was not a Muslim.⁸⁵ On less exciting days they smoked bhang (*cannabis indica*), or would every now and then have a glass of wine together.⁸⁶

⁸⁰ Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 136.

⁸¹ Ann E. Lucas, "The Creation of Iranian Music in the Age of Steam and Print, Circa 1880–1914," in *Global Muslims in the Age of Steam and Print*, James L. Gelvin and Nile Green (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 146–47; Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 135; Gertrude Bell, Diary Entry, 22.

⁸² Zahir ed-Dowleh to Friedrich Rosen, 1890s, ASWPC; Zahir ed-Dowleh to Friedrich Rosen, 1890s, ASWPC.

⁸³ Oscar Rosen, one of the Rosen twins, was named after Oscar Müller. Herbert Müller-Werth, Rosen's biographer of the post-war era, was his son. Müller also treated – to no avail – the fatally wounded Naser ed-Din Shah in 1896, and in later years sent frequent updates on Mozafer ed-Din Shah's health to the Auswärtiges Amt. Rosen, Persian Photographs, 1890s, ASWPC; Zahir ed-Dowleh to Friedrich Rosen, 1896, ASWPC; Siegfried zu Castell-Rüdenhausen, Bericht, 31 May 1896, A 5679, R 19072, PA AA; Siegfried zu Castell-Rüdenhausen, Bericht, 31 May 1896, A 5679, R 19072, PA AA; Oskar Müller, Bericht, 20 March 1897, A 5195, R 19073, PA AA; Herbert Müller-Werth, Wenn ich zurückschaue. Lebenserinnerungen, 1967, 3 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 1.

⁸⁴ A fifth generation descendant of Hasan ibn 'Ali, the second imam in Shi'a Islam.

⁸⁵ Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 137.

A significant element of their friendship were their joint visits of Safi 'Ali Shah's Thursday evening meetings. It is unlikely that Rosen advanced far along the mystical stages of Sufi enlightenment, if only for the limited number of years he spent in Iran. Rosen was closest to the younger generation of Sufis, like Safa, his friends Mirza Ali Muhamed Khan Muaddil es-Saltaneh in Shiraz and the later Iranian ambassador to Constantinople Haji Mirza Mahmud Khan Qajar Ehtesham es-Saltaneh, who all searched for ways of bringing together modern European approaches with Iranian culture and Islam. In his later writings Rosen noted Safi 'Ali Shah's studies of Rumi as formative for his own understanding of the thirteenth century mystic. Gracious for the "support and guidance" his Iranian Sufi friends had given him, Rosen found himself in Safi 'Ali Shah's emphasis on gnosis ('erfan), reason ('aql), verification (tahqiq), investigation (ta'miq), self-perfection (kamal-e nafs) and rejection of those believing in miracles – "false Sufis, godless 'ulema and superficial 'masters of ceremony'" ⁸⁷

Safi 'Ali Shah died in 1899, the year in which Rosen left Iran. Safa took over the leadership of the order, rapidly transforming it into the Anjoman-e Okhovaat (Organisation of Brotherhood), which while still following the Sufi rituals and norms became a modern organisation with membership registries, similar to Masonic lodges, and was known for its teachings of human equality, social works and as a forum of revolutionaries. The house of "the democratic derwish" Zahir ed-Dowleh became a hotbed for political reform.⁸⁸ Serving as governor of Hamadan during the Constitutional Revolution in 1906 Zahir ed-Dowleh established the first parliament in Iran, predating the national majles (assembly) in Tehran by half a year. In the counterrevolution of 1908, the family house in Tehran was bombed and ransacked, as Rosen sadly noted later, vanquishing Safa's "unique library of old and new Persian books".⁸⁹

Their friendship was mutually beneficial: socially, politically and intellectually. Zahir ed-Dowleh helped Rosen with being awarded the second class Shir o

⁸⁶ Rosen wrote that he only smoked bhang once and that Safa drank only very rarely, but then with gusto. Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 139.

⁸⁷ Georg Rosen and Friedrich Rosen, *Mesnevi*, 6; Rosen, *Persian Photographs*, 1890s, ASWPC; Nile Green, "Safi 'Ali Shah," 102–8.

⁸⁸ Ahmad Kasravi, trans. and ed., Lloyd Ridgeon, "The Detrimental Consequences of Sufis: Extracts from Sufism," in *Religion and Politics in Modern Iran: A Reader*, Lloyd Ridgeon (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 114; Lewisohn, "Ni'matullāhi Order," 455; Zarcone, *Sociétés secrètes*, 159.

⁸⁹ A.L.M. Nicolas, trans., "Le Journal *Khāber*. Presse Persane," *Revue Du Monde Musulman* XII, no. 12 (1910): 706–15; Ridgeon, "Zahir al-Dowleh's Contribution"; Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 139.



Fig. 3.3. 'Ali Khan Qajar Zahir ed-Dowleh in his library.

Khorshid (sun and lion) order by the Shah during his time as chargé d'affaires, and just like Amin as-Sultan Zahir ed-Dowleh could count on the support of the German representative.⁹⁰ Was Rosen influenced by the example of Zahir ed-Dowleh, who took the Sufi rituals and etiquette in the practice of Safi 'Ali Shah as the "ultimate source of reference" for his politics? The sources from the time provide as little proof for this speculation, as there is for direct influences of their friendship on Zahir ed-Dowleh's later politics as a "Sufi revolutionary".⁹¹ Their paths did not cross again when Zahir ed-Dowleh encountered parliamentary systems first-hand visiting Europe with Muzaffar ed-Din Shah in 1900. Both lived on to be influenced and worked on by the upheavals of the new century. While Rosen was in Iran though, they spent many a night together, helped each other, exchanged thoughts, tossed around ideas and contemplated the meaning of life. Towards the end of his days Rosen called Safa a "great friend", and in his 1926 photography book *Persien in Wort und Bild* he memorialised the master of ceremonies with a picture that showed him in his library reading a book.⁹²

6 European Society and Politics

Rosen had little sympathies for the politics of the Russian Empire. Like his father, who had opposed Russian influence in Serbia, Rosen saw Russian influence in Iran as a reactionary force. There were contacts with the Russian legation in Tehran and the diplomatic staff of all European missions would visit each other's garden parties, but only, rarely did Rosen exchange estimations of the political situation with the Russian envoy Jevgenij de Bützow.⁹³ Friedrich and Nina

⁹⁰ Amin as-Sultan was also supportive of Rosen's decoration. Contrary to European diplomatic protocol, which required the consent of the decorated national's government, the Shah informed Schenck's successor Wallwitz upon arrival in Tehran that Rosen would be decorated. Wallwitz and Berlin were irritated but accepted Rosen's decoration. Zahir ed-Dowleh to Friedrich Rosen, 1896, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Nikolaus von Wallwitz to Leo von Caprivi, 14 November 1893, I 22989, Personalakten 012577, PA AA; Ernst von Heintze-Weissenrode to Friedrich Rosen, 27 March 1893, ASWPC; Zahir ed-Dowleh to Friedrich Rosen, 7 April 1893, Zettelkiste, ASWPC.

⁹¹ Ridgeon, "Zahir al-Dowleh's Contribution"; Manoutchehr Eskandari-Qajar, "Subversive Subalterns: The Bagh-e Shah Twenty-Two," in *Iran in the Middle East. Transnational Encounters and Social History*, Houchang Chehabi, Peyman Jafari, and Maral Jafroudi (London: I.B.Tauris, 2015), 29–46.

⁹² Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 136; Friedrich Rosen, *Persien in Wort und Bild*, 130.

⁹³ Wardi [Georg Rosen], *Serbien in seinen politischen Beziehungen insbesondere zu Rußland. Ein historischer Essay*; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 19 September 1893 A 29, R 18977, PA AA; Friedrich

were closer to the British legation, which was next to the Russian representation the largest in staff size and political clout in Tehran. Similar to their interactions in Beirut the Rosens frequent interactions with the British of Tehran was in part due to the near absence of Germans in Iran. When Rosen arrived in Tehran the German legation consisted of three staff members: envoy, dragoman and munshi. By the time he left for good in 1899, a doctor, a secretary and second dragoman had been added to the staff. There were a couple of retired German generals in Iranian service, and a handful of German businessmen all over the vast country. Nothing with which the “too well entrenched” Russia and Britain could “be seriously challenged” with in Iran, as Kazemzadeh noted.⁹⁴

Mirroring Russian expansion into Iran from the north, the British maintained an infrastructure of consulates, trading companies and the network of the Telegraph Company the capital to connecting southern Iran and the Gulf. Bundling all, the British legation in Tehran was equipped with all the amenities needed for socialising and located in a lush, expansive garden with a tennis court. Rosen stood on good terms with Nicolson’s successor as British envoy, Frank Lascelles, and Nina became friends with Lascelles’ daughter Florence and niece, Gertrude Bell, who brought “joie de vivre” to the European community, when she visited in 1891 to study Persian.⁹⁵ Friedrich made friends with Bell’s affair, the legation secretary Henry Cadogan, who was musically interested and liked to listen to Nina play Bach or Wagner on the Rosen piano. Cadogan also supplied Rosen with information of what was happening in the country from the British network of sources, when the German was incapacitated by illness. With the British diplomat Evelyn Grant Duff, who was learning Persian in Tehran at the time, Rosen went bear hunting, and also with Lascelles’ successor Henry Mortimer Durand the Rosens entertained cordial relations. Durand and Rosen had known each other from India, where Durand had been Dufferin’s foreign secretary.⁹⁶

British influence in Iran declined after the collapse of the tobacco deal, with Lascelles becoming “apathetic and desponding”, as Bourne noted, leading

Rosen, Bericht, 28 January 1893, A3, R 19071, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 2 December 1892, A31, R 18977, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 29 October 1892, A27, R 18984, PA AA.

⁹⁴ Martin, *German-Persian Diplomatic Relations*, 32; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 17 February 1893, A 7, R 19033, PA AA; Zahir ed-Dowleh, *Memoirs and Documents*; Jenkins, “Experts, Migrants, Refugees”; Kazemzadeh, *Russia and Britain in Persia*, 592.

⁹⁵ Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 156–57; Georgina Howell, *Daughter of the Desert. The Remarkable Life of Gertrude Bell* (London: Macmillan, 2006), 59–61.

⁹⁶ Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Friedrich Rosen, 3 October 1895, Dufferin, ASWPC; Durand, *Autumn Tour in Western Persia*, 43; Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 146, 159–60; Drummond Black, *Dufferin and Ava*, 220.

Rosen to find him to “never seem to do any work at all”.⁹⁷ Observing a similar lack of activism with Dufferin in India, Rosen conceived of this absence of a “forward” policy as a good strategy. Having negotiated with the Amir of Afghanistan as Indian foreign secretary, the expectation of the British Indian government had been that Durand would turn the tide in Iran. But by the end of his tenure in Tehran in 1900 he was merely credited with preventing Russian advances.⁹⁸ Beyond emulating Durand, however, Rosen also collaborated on practical matters with the British legation. When in the aftermath of the assassination of Naser ed-Din in May 1896, Amin as-Sultan came under pressure and was eventually forced to go into exile in Qom, Rosen had come to learn “on good authority” that the new Shah Mozaffar ed-Din had decided to execute his father’s long-term leader of government. Rosen sought out the British envoy Durand, told him that it would be a “disgrace” for the Europeans if they let it happen, and moved him to intervene together with the Russian envoy Bützow.⁹⁹

The “early 1890s were the closest the Anglo-German relationship ever got to a honeymoon” in international politics Rüger noted.¹⁰⁰ In Tehran the Rosens with all their ties to British politics and culture embodied this close collaboration. The British were in an undisputed position of power and the Germans acted as good sport. Although Rosen disputed accusations of being an anglo-ophile in his German autobiography, his English memoirs were a testimony to the intimate relations between England and Germany in the Orient before the Great War: in Rosen’s understanding without a hint of suspicion, based on mutual respect and support. Lacking an active German foreign policy in Iran or most of the Middle East for the larger part of the 1890s, there was little for the British to fear from a handful of Germans in Iran, even less so from the pro-British Rosen with his English wife. On the contrary, Rosen spoke Persian, cultivated valuable relations at court, had useful sources of information and was a potential English ally in its struggle with Russia over influence in Iran. In line with his

97 Patrick James Bourne, “Sir Frank Lascelles: A Diplomat of the Victorian Empire, 1841–1920” (PhD diss., University of Leeds, 2010), 151.

98 “The Teheran Legation,” *Times of India*, 17 August 1900; “British Interests in India,” *Times of India*, 15 August 1900; “The Teheran Legation,” *Times of India*, 9 August 1900; Bourne, “Lascelles,” 152.

99 The episode was only recorded by Rosen. Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 154–55; Calmard, “Atābak-e A’ẓam, Amin-al-Soltān.”

100 Rüger, *Heligoland*, 109.

personal inclinations and Germany's weak position, Rosen pursued "the well-being of Germany always only in accommodation with England".¹⁰¹

7 Diplomatic Knowledge Formation between Poetry and Scholarship

The daily interactions with Iranian and European circles of society and politics were the environment in which Rosen was immersed into diplomatic practice and formed his knowledge of Iran. Learning about country and people was beneficial for his diplomatic tasks but was also meaningful on its own terms and could produce original scholarship. When Rosen first arrived in Tehran, he met Albert Houtum-Schindler, a long-term German-Dutch employee of the British Telegraph Company, who was considered most knowledgeable about Iran among Europeans, and on whose knowledge Curzon's influential two volume *Persia and the Persian Question* was largely based. Houtum-Schindler advised Rosen that his consular work would not be enough to fill his days: "If you mean to do no more than that, then you needn't have come at all. Your Legation has nothing to do except to write a few reports on Russia' and England's doings here. Don't fritter your time away with futilities but take up some subject and study it thoroughly." What should Rosen study in Iran?

He knew of the *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines* that Arthur de Gobineau had published a year before becoming secretary at the French legation in Tehran in 1854 and saw its impact among some Iranian intellectuals in Iran. He also read some of Ernest Renan's work, who contrasted "desert-dwelling mythless Semites" and "myth-creating pagan Aryans". Renan's controversial lectures on Islam and science at the Sorbonne in 1883 that postulated an essential "inferiority of Mohammedan countries [and] the decadence of states governed by Islam" were also known to Rosen, just like the in the 1890s continuing international discussions about the "Problem of Islam".¹⁰² In Tehran Rosen became fa-

¹⁰¹ Friedrich Rosen, *Aus einem diplomatischen Wanderleben. Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise* (Berlin: Transmare, 1931), 62.

¹⁰² Arthur de Gobineau, *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines* (Paris: Librairie de Firmin Didot Frères, 1853); Lou Andreas-Salomé, "Das Problem des Islams 1," *Vossische Zeitung* 338 (22 July 1894); Lou Andreas-Salomé, "Das Problem des Islams 2," *Vossische Zeitung* 350 (29 July 1894); Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 159; Lockman, *History and Politics of Orientalism*, 79–81; Seidel, *Kant in Iran*, 43–44; Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 293; Lisa Medrow, *Moderne Tradition und religiöse Wissenschaft: Islam, Wissenschaft und Moderne in den Arbeiten von I. Goldziher, C. Snouck Hurgronje und C. H. Becker*. (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2018), 67.

miliar with the arguments of the radical atheists and nationalists Mirza Fatali Akhundzadeh (1812–1878) and Mirza Aqa Khan Kermani (1853–1896), who espoused in their inventions a glorious Iranian past before the arrival of the Arabs and Islam. The solution for this supposed degeneration and backwardness of Iran, many thought, was a return to ancient pre-Islamic Iran, found in Firdowsi's epic poem *Shahnameh* (1010). And Rosen also knew Theodor Nöldeke's 1896 *Das Iranische Nationalepos* that lent Orientalist-scientific credibility to this national myth that came to constitute the "most influential *Weltanschauung* in modern Iran's history", as Zia-Ebrahimi argues.¹⁰³

Unlike the Iranian nationalists and Iranists who sought out the pre-Islamic origins of a supposedly Aryan Iran though, Rosen was not drawn to the tomb of Cyrus but to the gravesites of Sa'di and Hafez. In this Rosen's interests were similar to the Persophilia German poets like Goethe experienced in the first half of the nineteenth century. Amid German political impotence they found in Persian poetry noteworthy literary achievements that should be understood as part of "Weltliteratur" and in their quest for "Erkenntnis" (~knowledge) believed that learning about the world through its literature was a moral good.¹⁰⁴ Rather than clinging to these traditions of meeting the Orient through imagination and textual immersion in faraway Thuringian libraries, in Iran Rosen dealt with a vast amount of sources and living voices that brought his prior exposures and interests into relation to the current developments and the lived experience of Iran. Similar to his studies of the contemporary phenomenon of Indian theatre a few years earlier, Rosen was now mostly intrigued by Iranian poetry, recent history and philosophy. And Houtum-Schindler would support Rosen's studies

103 Theodor Nöldeke, "Das Iranische Nationalepos," in *Das iranische Nationalepos*, 2 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1920); Afshin Marashi, "The Nation's Poet: Ferdowsi and the Iranian National Imagination," in *Iran in the 20th Century. Historiography and Political Culture*, Touraj Atabaki (London: I.B. Tauris, 2009), 95–96; Pejman Abdolmohammadi, "History, National Identity and Myths in the Iranian Contemporary Political Thought: Mirza Fathali Akhundzadeh (1812–78), Mirza Aqa Khan Kermani (1853–96) and Hassan Taqizadeh (1878–1970)," in *Perceptions of Iran. History, Myths and Nationalism from Medieval Persia to the Islamic Republic*, ed. Ali M. Ansari (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014), 26–29; Zia-Ebrahimi, *Emergence of Iranian Nationalism*, 100–102.

104 Katharina Mommsen, *Goethe und die arabische Welt* (Frankfurt: Insel-Verlag, 1988), 167; Polaschegg, *Der andere Orientalismus*, 364–65; Dabashi, *Persophilia*, 89; Peter Neumann, *Jena 1800. Die Republik der freien Geister* (Munich: Siedler, 2018).

with his library of “historical and geographical manuscripts, local history, language and dialects”.¹⁰⁵

During the first couple of years Rosen read history manuscripts written by Qajar historians and chroniclers. Rosen took an interest in the reign of Feth ‘Ali Shah, the grandfather of Naser ed-Din, during whose reign from 1797 to 1834 the country experienced somewhat of a blossoming, but also lost swathes of Caucasian territories to the Russian Empire with the treaty of Turkmanchai of 1828. The period before the Qajars to the Zand dynasty (1750–1794) and the reign of the conqueror Nader Shah (r. 1736–1747) were equally intriguing to Rosen.¹⁰⁶ From there Rosen’s attention moved towards the Safavid period (1501–1736). In part this was kindled by reading the dissertation of his former student at the SOS Paul Horn on the Safavid Shah Tahmasp I (r. 1524–1576), who had found the period understudied in Europe.¹⁰⁷ Another reason for Rosen’s interest in the Safavid period was his circle of friends in Tehran. One of them, Badi el-Molk ‘Emad ed-Dowleh, owned a vast library holding many manuscripts from the era of the Safavids. Chief among his collection were the writings of sixteenth to seventeenth Islamic philosopher Molla Sadra Shirazi, who during the high time of Isfahan learning “revolutionized the doctrine of existence in Islamic metaphysics”, according to Rizvi.¹⁰⁸ Molla Sadra “extended the shift from Aristotelian substance metaphysics to Neoplatonic process metaphysics of change” in Islamic philosophy, with his spectrum of writing reaching from philosophy via theology to mysticism.¹⁰⁹ As Seidel notes, Molla Sadra and his *Kitab al-Mashai’ir* (Book of the Inspired Recognitions) had seen a rediscovery by Qajar era religious scholars and philosophers, a process that had begun under Feth ‘Ali Shah.¹¹⁰

105 John D. Gurney, “Houtum-Schindler, Albert,” *Encyclopædia Iranica* XII, no. 5 (2004): 540–43; Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 128–29; Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 12 May 1892, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas.

106 Friedrich Rosen to Lou Andreas-Salomé, 9 July 1891, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 12 May 1892, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG.

107 Friedrich Rosen to Lou Salomé, 9 July 1891, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Paul Horn, *Die Denkwürdigkeiten des Schâh Tahmâsp I. von Persien aus dem Originaltext zum ersten Male übersetzt und mit Erläuterungen versehen* (Strassburg: K. J. Trübner, 1891); Kreiser, “Divan for the Sultan,” 243.

108 Sajjad Rizvi, “Mollâ Şadrâ Şirâzi,” *Encyclopædia Iranica*, 20 July 2005. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/molla-sadra-sirazi>; Seidel, *Kant in Iran*, 40–51.

109 Rizvi, “Mollâ Şadrâ”; Sajjad Rizvi, “Mulla Sadra,” in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Edward N. Zalta (2009). <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2009/entries/mulla-sadra/>.

110 Rizvi, “Mollâ Şadrâ”; Seidel, *Kant in Iran*, 33–41; Mollâ Sadra Shirazi, *Le livre des pénétrations métaphysiques. (Kitâb al-Mashâ’ir)*, trans. Henry Corbin (Tehran: Taban, 1964), 46.

The politician ‘Emad ed-Dowleh was a philosopher in his own right. He grouped western philosophers in three types. The first (Descartes, Bacon, Leibnitz, Fenelon and Bossuet) he read as similar to the Iranian theological tradition with dogmatic concepts such as the eternal and all-knowing creator, humans responsible for their deeds and the world being the best of all possible worlds. A second group he saw as not believing in a creator, but in the eternity of power/energy and the material: Kant and Fichte. The third group he saw as believing in “a unified being, that appears in the varying manifestations of the One Being.” This current, ‘Emad ed-Dowleh found, was the least numerous in Europe, but also the one closest to the thought of Molla Sadra: aiming at unity, all being emanating from the One and at the same time existing as an all-encompassing reality.¹¹¹ ‘Emad ed-Dowleh distinguished himself by translating Molla Sadra’s *Kitab al-Masha’ir* from Arabic to Persian, making it widely accessible to Iranian students, and as Corbin had it, “doing honour to the Persian aristocracy”.¹¹² Mirroring Rosen’s observations that Western materialist philosophy was all a bit too matter of fact, the students of Molla Sadra regarded Islamic philosophy as superior to what they were exposed to from the west. The “rays emanating from a centre” with which ‘Emad ed-Dowleh poetically addressed Rosen in a letter indicates that the two found common ground in this sphere of seeking ta-whid (union).¹¹³

Another impetus for studying fifteenth and sixteenth century Iran was the Safi ‘Ali Shahiyya of the Ni‘matullahi order tracing its origins to the Safavid dynasty, in which the rulers had initially based their legitimacy and sovereignty on Sufi orders that were deeply ingrained in the Iranian populace. Like the Safavids of Turkmen origin, the Qajar dynasty sought to revive this social contract with the popular Sufis while “carefully maintaining a balance” with the ‘ulema.¹¹⁴ For a non-native speaker Rosen’s Persian skills were certainly advanced, but while he participated in some of these discussions about spiritual metaphysics and critical empiricism with ‘Emad ed-Dowleh, Zahir ed-Dowleh and Safi ‘Ali Shah, he likely scratched on the surface of these deliberations.

¹¹¹ Seidel, *Kant in Iran*, 50–51.

¹¹² Shirazi and Corbin, *Kitâb al-Mashâ’ir*, 52–53.

¹¹³ ‘Emad ed-Dowleh and Rosen also exchanged information on more mundane matters, such as the disappearance of a German tourist outside Tehran. Mohammad Hossein Mirza ‘Emad ed-Dowleh to Friedrich Rosen, 1892, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Mohammad Hossein Mirza ‘Emad ed-Dowleh to Friedrich Rosen, 1890s, Zettelkiste, ASWPC.

¹¹⁴ Rizvi, “A Sufi Theology Fit for a Shā’i King,” 83; Bayat, “Anti-Sufism,” 624–29.

He stuck mostly to the more straightforward histories of the Iranian past with the flowering of philosophy and religious thought acting as an indicator of greatness rather than being thoroughly analysed. His reading list at the time included *Tarikh-i Mahmud* (history of Mahmud), *Tarikh-i Daad Nadirie*, *Tarikh-i Zendi* by Mehr, *Tarikh-i Jihi*, *Tarikh-i Kadjari* composed under Feth 'Ali Shah by Mirza Hamaq Mujalaqi Naba', *Tarikh-i Jahanara* by Muhammad Sadiq Marwazi, and Hasan ibn Mohammad ibn Hasan's *Ketab Ta'rikh Qom*, translated by Houtum-Schindler in the early 1890s, a history of the city of Isfahan from the fourteenth century and a number of other histories dating back to the golden age of Islam.¹¹⁵ Rosen corresponded with former colleague Andreas in Berlin to check which of these manuscripts were reliable and novel – not so many they thought – and also supplied Andreas and their common friend Oskar Mann with books not available in Berlin.¹¹⁶ Thus exchanging views with Iranian savants around him and absorbing elements of their thought, while keeping an eye on scholarly developments in Germany, Rosen laboured away his afternoons in the study of Iranian history, with the hope of one day publishing something in German.

In the first years Rosen read these history manuscripts together with Sheikh Hassan. Andreas had studied with Hassan a good decade earlier and had recommended him to Rosen.¹¹⁷ The Sheikh, who lived on the southern side of the Gulestan palace in the poorer and more traditional part of Tehran, rode up to the wealthier part of town on his donkey in the early mornings before the heat set in. When not reading with Friedrich, Nina likely benefitted from his teaching as well, as Hassan became the primary Persian teacher of Nina's friend Gertrude Bell when she visited Iran in 1892.¹¹⁸ In a chapter Bell dedicated to Sheikh Hassan in her *Persian Pictures*, she remembers the middle-age man widely educated in Arabic, Aristotelian philosophy, geography, astronomy, and a master calligrapher of poetry. Next to an easy reading of Naser ed-Din Shah's travel diaries, the study of poetry served as the basis for Sheikh Hassan's Persian language studies. A short verse would be translated word by word, with the teacher then explain-

115 Rosen sold some of these manuscripts to the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin in 1931/2. Gurney, "Houtum-Schindler"; *Orientalische Handschriften Zugangsbuch*, *Orientalische Abteilung*, 1919–95, StaBiB.

116 Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 16 September 1892, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 28 November 1894, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG.

117 Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 12 May 1892, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Friedrich Rosen to Lou Salomé, 9 July 1891, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG.

118 Friedrich Rosen, "Bell, Persian Pictures," *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung* 33, no. 11 (1930): 917–18.

ing the connotations and the metaphysical notions and rhetorical puns to the student. Complicated by her romantic preconceptions of Persian poetry the beginner Bell struggled with properly understanding Sheikh Hassan, who only had a limited knowledge of the French language. Yet, Bell was impressed with his “wisdom”, finding herself “in the midst of sublime abstractions” when reading and discussing Hafiz and Omar Khayyam with her teacher.¹¹⁹

The Rosens and Bell shared their love for Persian poetry and while on a hiking trip in the Austrian Alps in the summer of 1894, they talked through Bell’s translations of Hafiz, which would come out in 1897 as *Poems from the Divan of Hafiz*.¹²⁰ Next to facilitating the translation of Hafiz’s poetry, Friedrich Rosen busied himself with his own learning of Persian verse. His notebooks from the time contain several dozen poems, mostly quatrains or other short poetry. In one – judging by its ornate binding it was the notebook that contained translations of poems that he considered polished enough to show to others – we find a dozen quatrains by Omar Khayyam, excerpts from Sa’di’s *Gulistan* and Hafiz, a Turkish soldier tune and a song sung by women in Shiraz lamenting the torture and murder of the last Shah of the Zend dynasty, Lutf Ali Khan (1789–1794).¹²¹

Rosen’s literary engagements were further driven by his interlocutors at the Shah’s court. They wrote Rosen letters adorned with panegyric poems, which he tried to return in kind. His friend Zahir ed-Dowleh, who wrote mystic poetry and possessed a large collection of classic Persian poems, was not the exception among Iranian state official in composing poetry.¹²² Literary Persian served as a language of “poetry, diplomacy and informal belles-lettres” all across the Persianate world and saw a revival under the Qajars from its high times under the Safavids (1501–1736), when it was custom for Iranian diplomatic reports to be written in rhymes.¹²³ One of the short Persian poems Rosen wrote can be read

119 Gertrude Bell, *Persian Pictures. With a Preface by Sir E. Denison Ross* (London: Ernest Benn, 1928), 95–104; Ann Lawson Drees, “The Intrepid Gertrude Bell: Victorian Lady, Explorer of the Middle Eastern Deserts, and Key Adviser to the New Iraqi Nation, 1868–1926” (PhD diss., Texas Woman’s University, 1993), 16.

120 Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 158; Gertrude Bell, Diary Entry, 18 August 1894 GBA NU; Gertrude Bell, Diary Entry, 20 August 1894, GBA NU; Gertrude Bell, Diary Entry, 22 August 1894, GBA NU; Gertrude Bell, *Poems from the Divan of Hafiz* (London: William Heinemann, 1897).

121 Friedrich Rosen, *Persische Gedichte*, 1890s, notebook, ASWPC.

122 Ridgeon, “Zahir al-Dowleh’s Contribution,” 159; Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 139.

123 John R. Perry, “Comparative Perspectives on Language Planning in Iran and Tajikistan,” in *Language and Society in the Middle East and North Africa. Studies in Variation and Identity*, Yasir Suleiman (London: Curzon, 1999), 155; M. Ismail Marcinkowski, “Safine-Ye Solaymani,” *Encyclopædia Iranica*, 20 July 2002. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/safine-ye-solaymani>; Colin P.

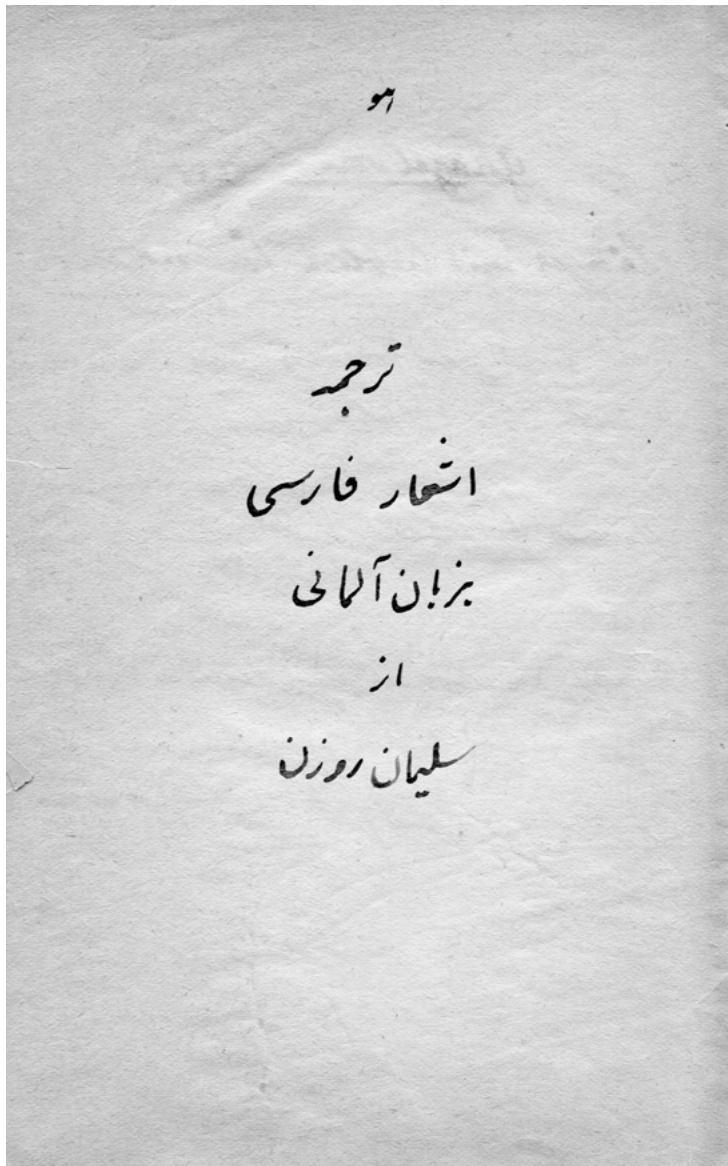


Fig. 3.4. “Translations of Persian Poems in German by Suleiman Rosen”.

Mitchell, *The Practice of Politics in Safavid Iran: Power, Religion and Rhetoric* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2009); Anahita Arian, “The XVII C. Safavid Diplomatic Envoy to Siam: A Politics of Knowledge Formation,” (PhD diss., University of Groningen, 2019).

as romantic-erotic longing, a figurative expression of the yearning of a friendship, or even a spiritual desire for the words of God. In English translation it reads:

Through the sucking of my blood
Your lips are read as ruby,
and still thirst for my blood.
Yet, when I cannot see them
I must suffer death.¹²⁴

As Rosen later recounted, this writing and gathering of poetry was facilitated by the common practice in Iranian society to know a large corpus of poems by Hafez (among the educated) and Sa'di (also among the less educated), and cite their wisdom in various situations.¹²⁵ In his memoirs he illustrated this appreciation of poetry across the social spectrum with an encounter he had on a gazelle hunting trip en route to the Dasht-e Kavir (Great Salt Desert). Looking for shelter at night, he found an abandoned caravanserai, in which a group of men of the Turkic Shahseven tribe were huddled in a circle and listened to their chief reading out Firdowsi's epic poem *Shahnameh*.¹²⁶ Speaking most to the centrality Persian poetry had taken on for Rosen during his years in Iran is a poem he wrote following Naser ed-Din's assassination in 1896, bemoaning the Shah's passing.¹²⁷ Persian poetry had become a way to perceive, understand and express reality for Rosen, and as the language of diplomacy at the Qajar court was literary, a poetic expression of grief over the death of the sovereign to whom the German was attached as a diplomat was only fitting.

In addressing the centre of German politics in Berlin and his diplomatic peers Rosen had to polish a different style. Merely a subordinate dragoman during his first year in Tehran, all of Rosen's work went to Schenck's reporting. In the years 1892 and 1893, however, the *Auswärtiges Amt* and the German embassies in London, St. Petersburg, Constantinople, Paris and Vienna learned about the developments in Iran through the reports of the chargé d'affaires Rosen. He did well. After the arrival of the new German envoy Nikolaus von Wallwitz, in the *Auswärtiges Amt* it was assumed that some of the reports Wallwitz sent to Berlin

124 Friedrich Rosen, A Poem by Hafez [in Persian], 1890s, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen, Two Poems in Persian, 1890s, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen, Love Poem in Persian, 1890s, Zettelkiste, ASWPC.

125 Friedrich Rosen, *Saadis Ratgeber*, 25–28.

126 Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 166–67.

127 Friedrich Rosen, Poem about the Assassination of Naser ed-Din Shah, 1896, ASWPC.

were “surely by Dr. Rosen”.¹²⁸ During the period as chargé d'affaires Rosen wrote a total of forty-five reports that varied in length from a few pages, describing the latest developments, to long analyses that provided socio-economic and historical background. His reports covered a wide spectrum of topics. He updated Berlin on the twists of the political negotiations taking place surrounding the tobacco concessions in 1892, how they led to the public protests supported by the ‘ulema under Shirazi and Ashtiani, and how the resulting destabilisation eventually drove the Shah and Amin as-Sultan to rely less and less on the British, and become more pro-Russian.¹²⁹ As a side story came the challenge of Zill as-Sultan, whom the Russians and Amin as-Sultan rightly saw as propped up by the British in the south, in Rosen’s analysis driving Amin as-Sultan into Russian arms more urgently still.¹³⁰

Rosen reported on border conflicts, often in connection with Turkmen, Kurdish or Lur nomads in the north-eastern or western provinces coming into conflict with sedentary populations, provoking the bordering Russian and Ottoman empires to intervene. As the Iranian central government was unable to muster a military force to suppress riots and fortify its borders far from Tehran, it was often Russia with its superior military that benefited from Iranian disorder.¹³¹ When popular discontent was not aimed at the Qajars it occasionally deflected on the European communities or the Christian Armenians, serving as a humanitarian pretext for Russian political or military intervention. Rosen’s reports also traced the rivalry of Russia and Britain along their respective modernisation projects. The British made the Karun river navigable from the Gulf and the Russians

128 Nikolaus von Wallwitz, Bericht, 2 November 1893, A 32, R 19048, PA AA; Nikolaus von Wallwitz, Bericht, 9 November 1893, A 34, R 19022, PA AA; Nikolaus von Wallwitz, Bericht, 13 November 1893, A 36, R 19022, PA AA.

129 Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 31 July 1892, A 19, R 18984, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 27 September 1892, A 24, R 18984, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 2 November 1892, A 28, R 18984, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 4 November 1892, A 29, R 18984, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 29 October 1892, A27, R 18984, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 2 November 1892, A 28, R 18984, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 31 July 1892, A 19, R 18984, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 9 February 1893, A5, R 18977, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 4 October 1892, 8948, R 18984, PA AA.

130 Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 13 November 1892, A 30, R 18984, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 23 February 1893, A8, R 19071, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 17 February 1893, A 7, R 19033, PA AA.

131 Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 10 May 1893, A 14, R 19021, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 13 May 1893, A 16, R 19048, PA AA; Arash Khazeni, “Through an Ocean of Sand: Pastoralism and the Equestrian Culture of the Eurasian Steppe,” in *Water on Sand. Environmental Histories of the Middle East and North Africa*, Alan Mihail (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 144.

gained road and railway construction concessions from Enzeli on the Caspian Sea to Tehran in the north.¹³²

The British led and financed Imperial Bank project was another topic of interest in Berlin, which Rosen supplemented with analyses of government finances, the tax revenue system and corruption. In a lengthy report Rosen outlined the Pishkesh system as a tributary revenue organisation of the Shah receiving gifts of money from the governors he appointed, both funding his coffers and symbolically establishing legitimacy. The problem, as perceived by Rosen, was that this led to many governors “buying” their province, having to pay yearly tributes to the Shah, while wanting to “press” money out of the population for themselves, leading to the various populations to rebel. This, Rosen posited, went hand in hand with wheat hoarding and speculation by government officials, leading to starvation across the land and ultimately making the population more susceptible to outbreaks of diseases, such as the cholera.¹³³

Prompted by the interest Zill as-Sultan expressed in military support from Germany, Rosen wrote up a lengthy report on the miserable state and abilities of the Iranian military. Due to underpayment many soldiers abandoned their posts and made a living by logging wood or selling fruits in the market. Rosen offered a bleak prediction for military reform under the current circumstances of Russian and British encroachment, lack of finances and widespread discontent with the government.¹³⁴ After the attempted murder of Naser ed-Din Shah in late 1892, the old age of the Shah came more and more to the foreground of reporting, and with that the character of the valiahd (crown prince) and governor of the northern province of Azerbaijan Mozaffar ed-Din. Until the accession of Mozaffar ed-Din to power in the aftermath of his father’s assassination in 1896, Rosen appears to not have met the valiahd. His sources had him know though that he was unprepared for the throne, as he had become disgruntled with governing his province and had resigned to inaction. Rosen considered Mozaffar ed-Din a progressive, willing and not corrupt, but saw him as ill-equipped

132 Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 6 September 1892, A 21, R 19021, PA AA; Nikolaus von Wallwitz, Bericht, 16 November 1893, A 37, R 19022, PA AA; Günther von Gaertner-Griebnow, Bericht, 2 September 1896, A 10321, R 19023, PA AA.

133 Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 4 October 1892, 8948, R 18984, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 2 November 1892, A 28, R 18984, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 13 November 1892, A 30, R 18984, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 31 July 1892, A 19, R 18984, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 27 September 1892, A 24, R 18984, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 20 March 1893, A11, R 18977, PA AA.

134 Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 17 February 1893, A 7, R 19033, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 9 November 1894, No 67, R 19033, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 13 January 1893, A 1, R 19071, PA AA.

for the succession, struggling in his province with an opposition that was incited by pro-Russian interest groups and a state of near anarchy.¹³⁵ Another annually recurring topic was the Shah's summer outing to the countryside with a retinue of some 1,500 people. The court spent several months in various castles and went hunting. The cost of these trips further weighed on the dwindling Iranian finances.¹³⁶

Rosen's reports were largely descriptive and neutral in tone. But a sense of despair shimmered through, when military reforms looked futile, corruption appeared too endemic in the financial system, and Russia and Britain in their great game pressed relentlessly on the buffer state. Strategically, Rosen's reports saw it against German interests that Russia should gain the upper hand in the country, as this would suppress the role of Britain, which was guaranteeing free trade for German business interests; something that would not be assured by Russia. Not uncharacteristically for other European reports, Rosen also showed signs of aversion to the 'ulema, calling them "fanatic priests" during religious riots in Asterabad, Hamadan and Shiraz.¹³⁷

The sources of his reports, which he often noted, were as wide as his social contacts and included the British and Russian envoys, Amin as-Sultan and various other members of court in official position. Neither Zahir ed-Dowleh nor 'Emad ed-Dowleh were to be found among his informants, but Rosen often cited "a well-informed source", who could have been Reza Khan, any of his friends or whatever Nina had learned in her conversations. Making the experience of one of his reports being leaked to the British newspaper *The Times* – causing him embarrassment with his source Cadogan from the British legation – Rosen was careful with betraying the origin of sensitive information.¹³⁸ There were only few instances in which Rosen's scholarly studies would have been of any consequence to these political reports. Occasional references to treaties from the early years of the Qajar dynasty lent his analyses depth, but the main contents were current. Rosen's soft knowledge of languages, customs, po-

135 Friedrich Rosen, Notiz, 2 December 1892, A41, R 19071, PA AA; Unknown to Friedrich Rosen, 1890s, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 19 September 1893 A 29, R 18977, PA AA; Nikolaus von Wallwitz, Bericht, 10 November 1893, A 35, R 18977, PA AA; Nikolaus von Wallwitz, Bericht, 6 November 1894, A64, R 19071, PA AA.

136 Gustav Schenck zu Schweinsberg, Bericht, 7 July 1891, A19, R 19071, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 31 July 1892, A 19, R 18984, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 18 May 1893, A17, R 19071, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 31 July 1893, A24, R 19071, PA AA.

137 Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 23 December 1892, A32, R 18977, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 4 October 1892, 8948, R 18984, PA AA.

138 Friedrich Rosen, deleted section in *Oriental Memories* on page 47, NBPC.

etry and history did however gain him access to both Iranian and European powerbrokers. The long briefings Rosen wrote were primarily based on original Iranian sources from the relevant ministries, individuals attached to the administration such as Houtum-Schindler or Joseph Rabino at the Imperial Bank, or his closer Iranian and British acquaintances. Reports on current developments usually consisted of mixed Iranian and European information, Russian in the north and British in the south of the country. This drawing on Russian and British sources and portrayal of Russian and British legation perspectives in Tehran was particularly useful for the German foreign policy apparatus, as it was after all not the disintegration of Iran that mattered but Germany's relations with Russia and Britain.¹³⁹

While some members in the Iranian elite courted German military expertise in the mid 1890s, followed by requests for Krupp weapons a few years later, Germany had for the moment no immediate interests in Iran.¹⁴⁰ This was due to change with the beginning of the Berlin-Baghdad railway in 1898. The danger of the railway route drawing close to the British dominated Gulf and through a connecting line from Baghdad via Khaneqin reaching Tehran and thus dashing Russian efforts to gain a transportation monopoly in Iran eventually contributed to the 1907 Russo-British accord over zones of influence in Iran. But these were developments after Rosen's time in Iran. While European suspicions of German expansion in Iran were not entirely unsubstantiated, the dynamics often started with Iranian officials wishing to bring Germany into the country, as they saw in German involvement a chance for development that Russian monopolies and British free-trading failed to produce.¹⁴¹ In so many words Rosen communicated to Berlin a sense of Iranian retardation – foreign-imposed, self-inflicted and mutually reinforcing. Even though Rosen was sympathetic to disintegrating Qajar Iran, the minor diplomat viewed its politics through the lens of expanding European empires and refrained from activism harmful to his career.

139 "Telegramm Sr. Maj. des Schah Muzaffer-Eddin an Se. Majestät den Kaiser," *St. Petersburger Zeitung*, 7 May 1896; Rudolf Nadolny, Bericht, 11 May 1896, A 5063, R 19072, PA AA.

140 Nikolaus von Wallwitz, Bericht, 17 February 1895, No 6, R 19046, PA AA; Martin, *German-Persian Diplomatic Relations*, 64–65.

141 Ferdinand von und zu Bodman, Bericht, 3 May 1898, A15, R 18980, PA AA; "Russland in Persien," *St. Petersburger Zeitung*, 13 May 1899; Charles H. Robinson, "The Railway Race to the Persian Gulf II," *The Empire Review* 2, no. 12 (1902): 667–70; A.C. Yate, "The Railway Race to the Persian Gulf I," *The Empire Review* 2, no. 12 (1902): 662–66; Martin, *German-Persian Diplomatic Relations*, 73–75; Friedrich H. Kochwasser, "Das Deutsche Reich und der Bau der Bagdad-Bahn," in *Araber und Deutsche. Begegnungen in einem Jahrtausend*, Friedrich H. Kochwasser and Hans R. Roemer (Tübingen: Erdmann, 1974), 323–29; Kazemzadeh, *Russia and Britain in Persia*, 592.

As much as Rosen enjoyed the intellectual climate he found in Tehran, if he wanted to reach more professional freedom and be posted to a station closer to Europe he needed to leave the dragoman service behind and climb up to the consul level. The quality of Rosen's reports were promising in the eyes of the Auswärtiges Amt. Council Ludwig Raschau and understate secretary Wolfram von Rotenham thought Rosen's reports were worth wider circulation. The Auswärtiges Amt's "grey eminence" Friedrich von Holstein appreciated Rosen's "equidistance" from Russian and British information. Wallwitz was impressed with Rosen when he arrived in Persia, informing his superiors in Berlin of his "great suavity with which he knew to befriend Persians of all categories, as well as the ease with which he translated utterances in German to Persian". Rosen's decoration by Naser ed-Din further elevated the standing of the dragoman.¹⁴² Although Rosen's legal skills were still mediocre, Wallwitz appreciated Rosen's education and "social forms" with which he befriended "European colonies and the locals" in Iran. Before leaving Tehran in 1896, Wallwitz thus recommended Rosen for the consular service.¹⁴³ The recommendation was taken up by his successor Günther von Gaertner-Griebenow, who saw Rosen as a suitable consular candidate and at the age of forty-two very well capable of "independent action". Known everywhere as a "Kenner von Land und Leuten" and in equally good standing in society, Gaertner-Griebenow would regret Rosen's departure, but in his opinion it was also not good for the "performance of Europeans to stay too long in Persia." In 1897, Rosen was permitted to sit the consul's exams.¹⁴⁴

Next to the chronically disliked legalistic "Praktische Arbeit" that Rosen had to produce, answering in French the procedure of what the consular duties were when a German abroad marries, gives birth or dies, Rosen produced a "Wissenschaftliche Arbeit" of one hundred and ninety-nine handwritten pages.¹⁴⁵ In line

142 Nikolaus von Wallwitz, Bericht, 13 November 1893, A 36, R 19022, PA AA; Nikolaus von Wallwitz, Bericht, 18 November 1893, A 38, R 19048, PA AA; Nikolaus von Wallwitz, Bericht, 6 November 1894, A 64, R 19071, PA AA; Nikolaus von Wallwitz, Bericht, 20 November 1894, A 70, R 19062, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, 1926, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte I*, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 43.

143 Nikolaus von Wallwitz, Promemoria betreffend dem Dragoman Dr. Rosen, 7 February 1896, I 8401, Personalakten 012577, PA AA.

144 Günther von Gaertner-Griebenow to Chlodwig zu Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 28 July 1897, 18090, Personalakten 012577, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Chlodwig zu Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 20 July 1897, 18091, Personalakten 012577, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Chlodwig zu Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 16 August 1897, 18091, Personalakten 012577, PA AA.

145 Friedrich Rosen, *Praktische Arbeit zum Konsulatsexamen*, 1897, I 16292, Personalakten 012570, PA AA.

with foreign secretary Adolf Marschall von Bieberstein's mid-1890s policy of economic expansion outside Europe, Rosen investigated German-Iranian trade relations and Iran's relations with other states, in view of increasing German exports to Iran. By the time he left Iran, Germany's share in Iranian trade was still minimal, but German imperialist ambitions were on the rise, with agitation by the colonialist *Alldeutsche* interest groups and also mainstream papers calling for a more active foreign policy in Iran.¹⁴⁶ Rosen drew on both European and Iranian sources for his exam: files from the German foreign service, the printed diplomacy and consular reports on trade and finance of the British Foreign Office from the 1870s to 1896, a number of publications, such as Otto Blau's *Kommerzielle Zustände Persiens* (commercial conditions of Persia), Franz Stolze and Friedrich Carl Andreas' *Die Grundverhältnisse Persiens* (basic conditions of Persia), Georg Friedrich von Marten's legal *Recueil des Traités* (collection of treaties) und *Nouveau Recueil des Traités*, C.G. Constable's and A.W. Stiffe's *The Persian Gulf Pilot*, Curzon's *Persia and the Persian Question*, and the unpublished 1896 *Report on the Possibility of the Reform of the Currency in Persia* by the director of the Imperial Bank of Persia, Joseph Rabino.¹⁴⁷ This cross-section of recent European collections Rosen complemented by "my own observations and records" from his travels in and around Iran.

The analysis of the political situation determining possibilities of increasing German trade was largely influenced by Rosen's experiences in the country. He argued that the German legation was not in a position to protect German business interests to the same extent as the British and Russians were with their military presence in the region.¹⁴⁸ Characteristic was his advice to German businessmen and a potential new consul at the port city of Bushehr on the Persian Gulf to take the time to learn language and culture, and take an interest in Persian classical literature and poetry. This would be the best way to enter into reliable business relationships with Iranians: the thus gained "respect for [the German's] personality will also be his best protection".¹⁴⁹ Rosen passed the consular exam and the *Auswärtiges Amt* circulated Rosen's exam internally and thought the analysis

146 "Deutsche Interessen in Persien," *National Zeitung*, 10 December 1901, 1; "Deutschland in Persien," *St. Petersburg Zeitung*, 15 December 1901; Martin, *German-Persian Diplomatic Relations*, 62; Kochwasser, "Bagdad-Bahn," 305–6; Olaf Brodacki, "Hamburg und der Persische Golf. Ein Kapitel wilhelminisch-deutscher Wirtschaftsgeschichte," *Zeitschrift des Vereins für hamburgische Geschichte* 77 (1991): 37–76.

147 Friedrich Rosen, *Wissenschaftliche Arbeit zum Konsulatsexamen*, 1897, I 16292, Personallisten 012570, PA AA, II.

148 Friedrich Rosen, *Wissenschaftliche Arbeit zum Konsulatsexamen*, 97–98.

149 Friedrich Rosen, *Wissenschaftliche Arbeit zum Konsulatsexamen*, 198–199.

to contain enough interesting information for it to be copied to the ministry of agriculture, domains and roads. A consulate in Bushehr was opened the year after and Rosen was slated to become its first vice-consul, but he dreaded spending his next years in hot and remote Bushehr and wiggled himself out of it.¹⁵⁰

A last immediate knowledge production resulted from Rosen's years in Iran. With the Persian self-study book he had published in German before coming to Iran a success, he noticed in his interactions with British visitors to Tehran that an easy introduction to the Persian spoken in Iran was lacking in English.¹⁵¹ An easy enough, if time-intensive task, Rosen reworked his *Shumā Fārsi hārf mizānid?* into an English version. The main difference to the German publication was that a previous latinised transcription of the Persian texts was now supplemented with the original Persian in Arabic letters, allowing the student to practice reading and writing. A vocabulary list was also added. Rosen started revising the text sources in 1894 and completed the manuscript in 1897.¹⁵² The British networks Rosen had tapped into in Tehran helped in having the self-study published. Next to working on her translation of Hafiz upon her return to England, Gertrude Bell had continued studying Persian with the young English scholar Edward Denison Ross, whom Rosen met on several occasions, when consulting the library of the British Museum in London in the mid-1890s. At the time Ross was working on translating the Russian Iranist Valentin Zhukovskii's *Omar Khayyam i stranstvuyushchie chetverostishiya* (Omar Khayyam's wandering quatrains) into English, sparking off a proliferation of Khayyam studies in Western Europe.¹⁵³ In his spare time Ross agreed to read the proof sheets of Rosen's Persian self-study and secured its publication with the Orientalist household publishers Luzac & Co.¹⁵⁴

As had been the case with the publication of his doctoral dissertation, the *Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar* had to pass a vetting process by his superiors at the Auswärtiges Amt. Politically scandalous publications were to be prevented and when the foreign office lacked knowledge of the arcane languages

150 Auswärtiges Amt to Minister for Agriculture, Domains and Roads, 29 November 1898, I 23826, Personalakten 012570, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, *Praktische Arbeit zum Konsulatsexamen*, 1897, I 16292, Personalakten 012570, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, 1926, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte I*, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 47.

151 Friedrich Rosen, *Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar*, VII.

152 Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 28 November 1894, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Friedrich Rosen, *Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar*, VIII.

153 Gertrude Bell to Friedrich Rosen, 11 September 1899, Briefe von Gertrude Bell, ASWPC; Howell, *Daughter of the Desert*, 68; Abdullaeva, "Zhukovskii, Valentin Alekseevich."

154 Friedrich Rosen, *Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar*, VIII; "Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar," *Luzac's Oriental List IX*, no. 3 (1898): 63.

of the East, it asked the head of the SOS, Eduard Sachau, to provide an estimation if a work was truly not political or compromising.¹⁵⁵ Still living on a measly dragoman's salary, one reason for publishing the *Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar*, next to the lofty spreading of cultural understanding, was the potential extra income through sales of a book that was bound to become more in demand with increasing trade and tourism at the turn of the century.¹⁵⁶ The marketing of the book was well-devised. Dedicated to Dufferin and mentioning Denison Ross prominently on the first page of the preface, it was discussed by Ross' friend Edward Granville Browne of Cambridge, "cordially recommend[ing it] to students of the spoken language of Persia." Luzac put it on its in colonial circles widely read publications list, and a number of British newspapers included snippet discussions. Rosen's former student Paul Horn, who had become professor extraordinarius at Strassburg, saw the book as "highly practical to persist honourably everywhere in Iran."¹⁵⁷ In later years the *Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar* became a recommended study book for interpretation candidates hoping to enter the British India administration, served engineers of the 1902–1905 Perso-Afghan Arbitration Commission in their charting of the geography of Siistan, and the German Iranist Oskar Mann also used Rosen's new edition to find his way around Iran on his first research trip there in 1901.¹⁵⁸

155 Gustav Humbert to Eduard Sachau, 29 July 1891, I 14546, Personalakten 012577, PA AA; Eduard Sachau to Leo von Caprivi, 1 August 1891, I 14546, Personalakten 012577, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Chlodwig zu Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, 10 September 1897, I 18157, Personalakten 012577, PA AA.

156 Friedrich Rosen to Leo von Caprivi, 18 February 1891, I 3930, Personalakten 012577, PA AA; F.A. Brockhaus to Friedrich Rosen, 12 October 1894, ASWPC.

157 Paul Horn, "Rosen, Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar," *Literarische Centralblatt* 17 (1898): 707; Edward Granville Browne, "Review: Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar by Fritz Rosen," *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, April 1898, 425–26; "Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar," *Westminster Review*, March 1898.

158 Oskar Mann to F. C. Andreas, 20 December 1901, 278 I Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; India Office, Seistan. Revenue Report and Notes of the Perso-Afghan Arbitration Commission, 1902–1905, Volume II. Part V – Appendices and Glossary, 1906, L/PS/20/23, BL IOR; Edward Granville Browne, *A Literary History of Persia. From the Earliest Times Until Firdawsi* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1919), 495; Health and Lands – Government of India Department of Education, Notification, 7 November 1927, R/15/2/1458, BL IOR.

8 The Sword of Knowledge and Germany's Rise

Reminiscent of Benjamin Disraeli's infamous line in *Tancred*, Rosen's seven years as dragoman in Iran set off his career of the East.¹⁵⁹ Beyond utilitarian careerism and similar to the underprivileged medical professionals of Britain's Celtic fringe that Harrison described, Rosen "regarded [his] experience as relevant to the problems faced by... practitioners [at home], and [he] firmly believed that [his] skills and knowledge were transferable" in a greater project of accessing and making accessible the real and no longer merely imagined Orient by drawing on a variety of often living sources. The "independent cast of mind" that Rosen shared with Harrison's doctors in the West and East Indies and his career-orientation made him draw on his language abilities and people skills as social capital to reach for the elevated realms of German politics via the Orient. Iran may not have been desirable for higher ranked European diplomats, but for lower or junior officials with good language skills the country could be a springboard to higher placements.¹⁶⁰

In years to come, Rosen and a few like-minded European scholars became more effective in promoting the in European Orientalism still peripheral study of Persian and Iran. The "living encounters" of Rosen's interactions with Iranian savants and politicians and his reliance on their explanations for understanding Iranian history and culture saw him translate their thought into the dominant discourse structures of European Oriental studies and thus reshaped what constituted Iranistic canonicity.¹⁶¹ For the moment, however, Rosen had established a reputation among fledgling Iranists in Europe and made the more straightforward aspects of his knowledge accessible to a wider European audience of merchants, colonialists and researchers. The intricacies of Persian poetry and history Rosen had included to make Iran and Persian culture more relatable were, however, in all likelihood ignored by British geographical missions or German scholars and merchants.¹⁶²

159 Said, *Orientalism*, 5; Benjamin Disraeli, *Tancred or the New Crusade* (New York: M. Walter Dunne, 1904), 182.

160 Mark Harrison, *Medicine in an Age of Commerce and Empire. Britain and Its Tropical Colonies, 1660–1830* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 4–5.

161 Medrow, *Moderne Tradition und religiöse Wissenschaft*, 158; Rothman, "Dragomans and 'Turkish Literature'," 421.

162 Mojtaba Kolivand, ed., *Persische und kurdische Reiseberichte. Die Briefe des Berliner Orientalisten Oskar Mann während seiner beiden Expeditionen in den Vorderen Orient 1901–1907* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2014), 14.

On a practical level, the years Rosen had spent first in Beirut and then in Tehran had served his career advancement well. With his years at the SOS counted towards the ten years of dragoman service that were required to move up to consul, he had also made a name for himself in the *Auswärtiges Amt* for his detailed reporting. His well-informed consul's exam on Iran only improved his standing. Rosen's first consul position was a temporary replacement of the long-serving consul Karl Richarz in Baghdad in 1898. Rosen disliked Baghdad, its relentless heat confining him to inaction and preventing him from studying Iraqi history, as he had intended. "Suff wäre hier die einzige vernünftige Beschäftigung" he wrote in one of the many letters he sent his brother Hareth during his year there. In others he ridiculed those well-wishers in Germany, who had been jealous of his posting to the city of *One Thousand and One Nights*. He found the city's lack of savants to discuss philosophy and history with to compare unfavourably to the social life he had entertained in Tehran.¹⁶³ After less than a year in Baghdad, which gained him some prominence at the *Auswärtiges Amt* amid Germany's increasing interest in Middle Eastern railways and with the development of the petroleum industry, Rosen rode on horse from the Euphrates up via Khaneqin, to tribal regions of the Lurs and onwards to Hamadan and Tehran. On the way he dutifully recorded the ethnography of the area surrounding a possible future railway connection from Baghdad to Tehran and engaged in what could be called poetic jousting with a couple of Arab and Lur tribal leaders. Foreseeing the fundamental changes that railway construction and oil exploitation would bring to the region, Rosen anguished over the prospect of the horse-riding and poetic Orient he knew coming to an end.¹⁶⁴

Shortly after arriving in Tehran in January 1899, Rosen was recalled to Berlin to be appointed as head of the recently upgraded general consulate in Jerusalem. Benefitting from the increasing significance of the Ottoman Empire in German foreign policy and not least from the recent journey of Kaiser Wilhelm II to Jerusalem, Rosen arrived in Palestine to witness the changes railway constructions

163 "Boozing would be the only reasonable activity here." Friedrich Rosen to Hareth Rosen, 3 NL Müller-Werth 1199/34, HHStAW; Friedrich Rosen, 1898, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte* II, 7 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, 1926, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte* I, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 49; Friedrich Rosen, Bericht, 13 July 1898, A 13, R 19066, PA AA.

164 Friedrich Rosen, 1898, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte* II, 7 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA; Ferdinand von und zu Bodman, Bericht, 3 May 1898, A15, R 18980, PA AA; J.G. Lorimer, "Appendix Q. British and Foreign Diplomatic, Political, and Consular Representation in the Countries Bordering on the Persian Gulf," *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, Oman and Central Arabia* 1, no. II (1915).



Fig. 3.5. Friedrich Rosen in consular uniform, flanked by two kawasses, riding on his stud Nimr to the Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem to celebrate the birthday of Kaiser Wilhelm II on 27 January 1900. Photograph by Gertrude Bell.

and development had brought to the city he had grown up in.¹⁶⁵ The Jerusalem of his childhood was but an appendix to the new modern city arising outside the city walls. The quarrelling of the Christian fractions, however, had stayed the same. When not busy in pacifying the infighting, often in cooperation with the French general consul Ernest Auzépy, Rosen tried to work on a manuscript his father Georg had started almost half a century earlier that hypothesised that after the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE and the dispersal of the Jews, they and the Phoenicians had fused into one people.¹⁶⁶ His friend from Ira-

¹⁶⁵ Arthur von Rex to AA, 8 February 1899, I 3394, Personalakten 012570, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, 1926, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte I*, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 51–52.

¹⁶⁶ Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 255–67; Tsourous, “Sepulchre Intercommunal and International,” 379; Georg Rosen, *Juden und Phönizier. Das antike Judentum als Missionsreligion*

nian days, Gertrude Bell, who spent half a year with the Rosens in Jerusalem to study Arabic, connected Rosen with British scholars knowledgeable on the topic, but the book was only published in 1929.¹⁶⁷

Neither distinguishing himself nor rocking the boat of fraught Jerusalem politics, and continuing to write thorough reports from the Holy Land, Rosen was in the autumn of 1900 called to the political section of the Auswärtiges Amt in Berlin, in order to “den Referenten für den Orient neu zu besetzen. Nach seinem langjährigen Aufenthalt in Persien und der Türkei sowie durch die daselbst eingehende Kenntniss der orientalischen Verhältnisse ... ist der derzeitige Konsul in Jerusalem, Dr. Rosen, hierfür besonders geeignet.”¹⁶⁸ Bringing more first-hand expertise of the Orient into the centre of German foreign affairs, Rosen’s move to Berlin would also change the way in which he continued to produce or support the production of knowledge about Iran and the East more generally.

und die Entstehung der jüdischen Diaspora, ed. and comp. Friedrich Rosen, Georg Bertram (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1929), VII.

167 Gertrude Bell to Friedrich Rosen, 11 September 1899, Briefe von Gertrude Bell, ASWPC; Lawson Drees, “Intrepid Gertrude Bell,” 21.

168 “fill the aide position for the Orient anew. After his long years of residence in Persia and Turkey as well as through the knowledge of the Oriental conditions there... is the current consul in Jerusalem, Dr. Rosen, particularly well suited.” Oswald von Richthofen, Note, 13 November 1900, 23067, Personalakten 12571, PA AA.

Chapter 4

Knowledge in Political Negotiations.

Three Diplomatic Encounters

1 Introduction

Es genügt nicht, daß derjenige Beamte der die Interessen seiner Behörde vor den Beamten des fremden Staates zu vertreten hat, die fremde Sprache kennt, sie in gewöhnlichen Verkehr mündlich und schriftlich anzuwenden weiss, sondern er soll im Stande sein – letztes Ziel! – sich vor den Mächtigen der Erde geschickt und ohne Fehl auszudrücken und zu benehmen, und in Konferenzen nicht zurückzustehen hinter denjenigen, denen die Konferenzsprache Muttersprache ist.¹

On the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Seminar für Orientalische Sprachen (SOS) in 1912, its director Eduard Sachau drew up a linguistically and culturally adroit official, able to stand on his own and fend for German interests on the global stage. The appropriate education of German diplomats for their service in the extra-European world continued to be the SOS' most prominent task. The seminar's former teacher Friedrich Rosen was a forerunner of the envisioned culturally versed German diplomat.² This chapter investigates the role applied cultural knowledge of the type necessary for conferences, trade, international law and in front of “the powerful” played during the time of expanding German imperialism in three sets of political negotiations that involved Rosen, both from the German perspective and from that of its counterparts.

In the spring of 1902 the Persian Shah Mozaffar ed-Din went on a several months long journey through Europe, finding reception at the royal courts of

1 “It does not suffice, that the official, who has to represent the interests of his government agency to the officials of a foreign state, knows the foreign language and how to apply it in common communication orally and in writing, but he shall be able – last goal! – to express and conduct himself deftly and without fault when facing the powerful of this earth, and not stand back in conferences behind those for whom the conference language is their native tongue.” Sachau, *Seminar für Orientalische Sprachen*, 10.

2 There is of yet no comprehensive study of the SOS, its functions, output, staff and changing fortunes between academia, politics, trade and colonialism over the longue duree of its existence. Mangold, “*Weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft*”, 227–50; Mangold-Will, *Begrenzte Freundschaft*, 187–92; L. Hanisch, *Nachfolger der Exegeten*, 40–45; Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 350–57; Burchardt, “School of Oriental Languages”; Larissa Schmid, “Competing Visions of Area Studies in the Interwar Period: The School of Oriental Languages in Berlin,” *Middle East – Topics and Arguments* 4 (2015): 127–37.

St. Petersburg, Rome, Paris and London. He also spent three days in Berlin and Potsdam. During the Shah's visit to Germany Rosen was attached to his retinue and acted as interpreter in conversations with the Kaiser and at formal occasions.³ In the first months of 1905 Rosen led a mission to Addis Ababa to establish diplomatic relations between Germany and Ethiopia and negotiate terms of a treaty of friendship and trade with Ethiopian Emperor Menelik II.⁴ In the fall of 1906 Rosen travelled with a large entourage from Tangier to Fez to meet with Sultan Mulai 'Abd al'Aziz IV in a show of German support for the embattled Sultan and to push for German interests in Morocco.⁵

Each instance of negotiations is described in its respective context, Rosen's understanding and cultural ability is situated and the relevance of socio-cultural understanding is analysed. Cultures as distinct categories are understood as non-essential, constructed and changing, and here analytically employed as ideal-types following Max Weber.⁶ "[E]ach culture is a unique complex of attributes subsuming every area of social life" Cohen notes in his analysis of twentieth century diplomacy in *Negotiation across Cultures*, which argues that "[u]nencumbered discourse... rests on the interlocutors' possession of a complex and extensive body of shared knowledge, conscious and unconscious, of what is right and fitting in human communication and contact. When this knowledge is absent, inadvertent confusion may result."⁷ With Rosen shaped by his various interactions in different cultural and political contexts, and following on the observation of Motadel that the Shahs' visits to Europe were in part motivated by the desire to understand the foreign, these political interactions are also understood as processes of learning and acculturation.⁸ The following questions are

3 Motadel showed how that the visits of the Iranian shahs served the purpose of learning about Europe and strengthening sovereignty through dynastic recognition. David Motadel, "Qajar Shahs in Imperial Germany," *Past & Present* 213 (November 2011): 191–235.

4 Daum analyses Rosen as a skilled diplomat and power broker, Zitelmann Rosen's orchestration of the Aksum expedition under Enno Littmann, and Zimen provides a general overview of the Rosen mission. Tafla deals with the episode in his larger study on German-Ethiopian diplomatic relations. Daum, "Rosen, Littmann, Aksum"; Zitelmann, "Politische Einbettung der Aksum-Expedition"; Zimen, *Rosen für den Negus*; Tafla, *Ethiopia and Germany*.

5 Mangold-Will analyses Rosen's claim in his memoirs that he had to travel slowly to the Sultan in Fez, as this constituted the mode of travel of an Oriental grandee, and if this was a case of essentialising. In his study of the German colony in Morocco Mai mentions the episode in passing. Mangold, "Oriental Slowness"; Mai, *Marokko-Deutsche*, 319–27.

6 Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Grundriss der verstehenden Soziologie* (Frankfurt: Zweitausendeins, 2005), 4.

7 Raymond Cohen, *Negotiating Across Cultures. International Communication in an Interdependent World* (Washington: United States Institute of Peace, 2002), 11–18.

8 Motadel, "Qajar Shahs in Imperial Germany," 193–94.

investigated: how did socio-political and cultural knowledge deliver in the pursuit of interests, influence and power? In how far was culture and cultural difference a significant factor in political interactions? Could differences and perceptions of differences be mediated or bridged by multilingual and transcultural actors? How did actors learn during and along such political interaction? What was the role of such cultural understanding of the political interlocutor amid asymmetrical power relations? An analysis of these three instances of negotiations in their political and situational contexts and before the background of Rosen's expertise shows that cultural knowledge in the sense of the SOS had significant effects on the symbolic level of political prestige and equally facilitated non-crucial political collaboration. Vital political matters such as finances, or military aid, were, however, left mostly unaffected, as larger forces of power prevailed in bilateral and international relations.

2 Cultural Knowledge and Political Leeway between Royal Courts. Mozaffar ed-Din Shah's Visit to Germany in 1902

When Rosen started working on the Orient desk in the Auswärtiges Amt in early 1901, little had changed in German-Iranian relations from when he was last in Iran in 1899. The German legation in Tehran was still a minor player crunched between the Russian and British missions. Even Belgium and the United States had become more involved, soon outdoing Germany in influencing Iranian affairs. Germany had been offered a banking concession on the unauthorised instigation of chargé d'affaires Ferdinand von und zu Bodmann in 1897, but forwent the overture as German banks were not interested and the German government was reluctant to insert itself into the Russo-British scramble. The most notable change had been the 1899 establishment of the German consulate at Bushehr in the Persian Gulf to facilitate direct German exports via ship. But as irritating as the German consulate on the Gulf was to the British, German trade remained negligible.⁹

After taking over from his assassinated father in 1896, the new Iranian Shah, Mozaffar ed-Din, had started out as a reformer. He shook up his government, expelled his father's long-standing Sadr Azam Amin as-Sultan and brought in the

⁹ Wilhelm Litten, *Persien. Von der "pénétration pacifique" zum "Protektorat". Urkunden und Tatsachen zur Geschichte der europäischen "pénétration pacifique" in Persien 1860–1919* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1920), 217; Martin, *German-Persian Diplomatic Relations*, 62.

reformer Amin ed-Dowleh and the military commander ‘Abd-al Hosayn Mirza Farmanfarma – both leaning towards Britain. Farmanfarma had signalled in 1897 to Rosen that Iran would be interested in purchasing weaponry from the German steel-magnate Krupp, but such overtures were rejected by German diplomats and ultimately by the Krupp company itself.¹⁰ With reform efforts faltering quickly, the more Russia-reliant Amin as-Sultan was re-installed at the helm of the government and by 1900 Iran took on a major loan from Russia in exchange for a railway concession in the north of the country, cementing Russian preponderance in Iranian affairs.¹¹ In the same year, a potential extension of the Baghdad railway via the caravan route at Khaneqin and Hamadan was contemplated by Germany. Britain was initially not opposed to involving Germany more in the region as a cost-efficient way to bolster the buffer states between its possessions in India and its northern rival. But the Russian press grew concerned with German political designs and Germany dropped its Iranian railway plans.¹²

Like his father Naser ed-Din Shah, who had travelled across Europe in 1873, 1878 and 1889 to conclude treaties, shore up his reputation with European rulers and learn about the latest developments in Europe, Mozaffar ed-Din also travelled north-west in 1900, 1902 and 1905. Naser ed-Din had been received by Bismarck in 1873 but during later visits Bismarck skipped meeting the Shah to avoid upsetting Russia. By the turn of the century, German global interests increased and as Motadel observes “an attitude of imperial superiority and rudeness” set in under Wilhelm II. When Mozaffar ed-Din crisscrossed the continent in 1900 the German leadership refused to meet the Shah.¹³

10 Martin, *German-Persian Diplomatic Relations*, 64–65; Cyrus Mir and Elr, “Farmānfarmā, ‘Abd-al-Hosayn Mirzā,” *Encyclopædia Iranica*, 15 December 1999. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/farmanfarma-abd-al-hosayn-mirza>.

11 Calmard, “Atābak-e A’ẓam, Amīn-al-Soltān”; Kazemzadeh, *Russia and Britain in Persia*, 305–15.

12 Spurred by calls among the colonialist *Alldeutsche* for German colonies along the Baghdad railway, the prospect of its extension into Iran was talked up by British diplomats and the press. Richard von Kühlmann to Bernhard von Bülow, 21 January 1902, A 6, R 19088, PA AA; Yate, “The Railway Race to the Persian Gulf I”; Robinson, “The Railway Race to the Persian Gulf II”; “Deutschland in Persien”; “Deutsche Interessen in Persien”; Kochwasser, “Bagdad-Bahn,” 326; Johannes Lepsius, Albrecht Mendelssohn Bartholdy, and Friedrich Thimme, *Weltpolitische Rivalitäten, Die Große Politik*. (Berlin: Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft für Politik und Geschichte, 1924), 512; Fuhrmann, “Deutschlands Abenteuer im Orient,” 15; Hilmar Kaiser, “German Railway Investment in the Ottoman Empire: The Colonial Dimension,” in *Türkisch-Deutsche Beziehungen. Perspektiven aus Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, Claus Schöning, Ramazan Çalik, and Hatice Bayraktar (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 2012), 154–70.

13 Motadel, “Qajar Shahs in Imperial Germany,” 206–8.

In the fall of 1901 the Iranian government once more announced that the Shah would travel to Europe. First Russia declared that it would accord the Shah every honour, then Great Britain extended a royal invitation, and also the Italian king agreed to receive the Shah. With the Shah's visit welcomed elsewhere in Europe, in early February 1902 the Iranian envoy to Berlin, Mirza Mahmud Khan Qajar Ehtesham es-Saltaneh, asked the German government to receive the Shah. The Iranian government hoped to improve "relations of personal friendship" between the Shah and the Kaiser. "One of the main reasons for the European tour was apparently to be received by the kaiser", as Motadel noted.¹⁴ In the mind of the Kaiser, however, there was no reason to meet the Shah. As Rosen recounted, the Kaiser believed the Iranians to be completely controlled by Russia, rendering a meeting superfluous. Widely read German diplomatic reports from Tehran described the "shiftlessness and weak-mindedness of the Shah", on which the Kaiser commented: "A ripe fruit! Who will pick it!" The Kaiser had heard rumours – Rosen thought those "ridiculous anecdotes" – that the previous visits of Naser ed-Din Shah had been awkward and embarrassing.¹⁵

What had changed since the previous trip of the Shah two years earlier was an economic downturn in Germany, which the German government intended to counter by increasing exports. In a speech to the Reichstag on 8 January 1902, chancellor Bernhard von Bülow had geographically outlined where Germany saw its future sales markets, as an arch spanning from East Asia to North Africa. Diplomatic circles in Tehran were quick to note that Iran also figured.¹⁶ In line with the new policy the chancellery tried to convince the Kaiser that Germany had economic interests in Iran – the Kaiser dismissed them as irrelevant. Eventually, in a concerted effort of the chancellery and the German envoy in Tehran, Arthur von Rex, who weighed in that his position would suffer from the insult of a German rejection, an arrangement was proposed under which the Shah would be received in Germany – in another snub – at the same time as the crown prince

14 Mahmud Khan Qajar Ehtesham es-Saltaneh to Oswald von Richthofen, 20 February 1902, 109, R 131735, PA AA; "Die neue persische Anleihe," *Hamburgischer Correspondent*, 22 February 1902; "Die Lage in Persien," *Hamburgischer Correspondent*, 19 February 1902; Motadel, "Qajar Shahs in Imperial Germany," 208.

15 Friedrich Rosen, Unterlagen u. Beiträge betr. Reichsminister u. Diplomat Friedrich Rosen (†1935) – Besuch Schah Muzaffar eddin 1902, 1920s, 1 NL Müller-Werth 1199/34, HHStAW; Lepsius, Mendelssohn Bartholdy, and Thimme, *Weltpolitische Rivalitäten*, 518.

16 Richard von Kühlmann to Bernhard von Bülow, 21 January 1902, A 6, R 19088, PA.

of Siam.¹⁷ In early March the newspapers reported that the Shah was expected to arrive in Berlin on 29 May 1902 from Italy, and leave for France four days later.¹⁸

At the time busy with estimating how Russo-British relations would be affected by the death of the long-ruling Emir Abdur Rahman Khan of Afghanistan in late 1901, a sweltering conflict between the Ottomans and the Greeks over Macedonia, and a developing low-level conflict between Germany and Britain over a potential end point of the Baghdad railway in Kuwait, Rosen's name does not appear in the diplomatic papers surrounding the issuance of the German invitation or the preparations of the Shah's German stay until early May.¹⁹ But he was aware of the preparations on the German and on the Iranian side. On 2 May the Persian envoy Ehtesham es-Saltaneh – a neighbour of Rosen in the Hildebrand Straße near Tiergarten and acquaintance from Tehran – requested from the Auswärtiges Amt that Rosen should be attached to the Shah for the duration of his trip in Germany. Rosen “mastered Persian” and enjoyed “personal relations with members of the retinue of the Shah, particularly the grandvezir [Amin as-Sultan]”, making such an attachment desirable.²⁰ The grey eminence at the Auswärtiges Amt, Friedrich von Holstein, inquired with the Kaiser's court if this arrangement would meet approval on the same day, but did not elicit a reply. Well on its way across Europe, the Shah's retinue once again wrote to the Auswärtiges Amt on 22 May, repeating the request and adding that Rosen should act as interpreter in conversations between the Kaiser and the Shah. This request was then approved by the Kaiser personally.²¹ Rosen speculated that Rex had intervened again to prevent another “act of tactlessness” against the Iranians. Rosen had briefly worked under Rex in Tehran in

17 Bernhard von Bülow to Wilhelm II, 23 February 1902, I 4593, R 131735, PA AA.

18 *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 1 March 1902; Voyage de S.M.J le Schah, March 1902, I 8140, R 131735, PA AA.

19 Friedrich Rosen to Richard von Kühlmann, 19 March 1902, A 4380, R 19058, PA AA; Johannes Lepsius, Albrecht Mendelssohn Bartholdy, and Friedrich Thimme, *Zweibund und Dreibund 1900–1904, Die große Politik*. (Berlin: Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft für Politik und Geschichte, 1924), 157; Johannes Lepsius, Albrecht Mendelssohn Bartholdy, and Friedrich Thimme, *Die Wendung im deutsch-englischen Verhältnis, Die große Politik*. (Berlin: Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft für Politik und Geschichte, 1924), 496–512.

20 Oswald von Richthofen, Note, 2 May 1902, I 11250, R 131735, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, *Aus einem diplomatischen Wanderleben. Ende des Kaiserreichs. Weimarer Republik*, Herbert Müller-Werth (Wiesbaden: Limes, 1959), 61; Mehrdad Amanat, “Eḥtešām-al-Saltāna,” *Encyclopædia Iranica* VIII, no. 3 (2003): 269–71.

21 Friedrich von Holstein to Heinrich von Tschirschky, 2 May 1902, I 11250, R 131735, PA AA; Heinrich von Tschirschky to Otto von Mühlberg, 24 May 1902, I 13230, R 131735, PA AA; Heinrich von Tschirschky to Otto von Mühlberg, 23 May 1902, I 13230, R 131735, PA AA.

the winter of 1898/9 and thought little of his former chief, “who exceeded all his predecessors in foolishness and lack of sensitivity”. There was no other way, Rex had it, “the Persians saw a friend in Rosen”.²²

The in Iran “nearly almighty” Amin as-Sultan counted on Rosen to make the Shah’s and his own visit to Germany a success.²³ As the Iranian government became more and more reliant on Russian finances and was equally distrustful of British machinations, another effort at drawing in Germany was Amin as-Sultan’s best option at preserving what was left of the country’s integrity. Iran’s quagmire was clear to German diplomacy. The German envoy to Italy, Karl von Wedel, wrote to Berlin, after talking with the Shah at a reception in Rome, that he believed that the ruler sought to preserve “his Persian independence and his freedom” and that his visit to Berlin was motivated by the belief that this desire would be understood in Germany. Wedel also noted that the Shah feared for his life and constantly carried a loaded gun in his pocket.²⁴ Intrigues at the Iranian court were ongoing and had in the previous fall led to a botched coup against Amin as-Sultan, who stood accused of selling the country out to the Russians. The conspiring officials were removed. Among them was the previous Iranian envoy in Berlin, who was replaced by Ehtesham es-Saltaneh, loyal to Amin as-Sultan and friend of the German official responsible for Iran.²⁵ As Mozaffar ed-Din and his several hundred strong entourage – Rosen reckoned many court members had to come along as they otherwise might have conspired against the Shah or the Sadr Azam at home – made their way from Rome through Switzerland to the German border, Rosen travelled by special train to Basel in the company of General Viktor von Lignitz, Major Lothar von Trotha and Ehtesham es-Saltaneh to receive the Shah.²⁶ Lignitz and Trotha were added on to the welcoming committee at the last minute and had during the three days only a decorative role. It stands to reason that the so explicitly requested friend of the Iranians should not be left all alone with the Shah’s party.

The Shah, who had made a stop in Lucerne to buy camera equipment that would “kick off Persia’s adventure in cinematography”, was glad to meet the Ger-

²² Friedrich Rosen, *Besuch Schah Muzaffar eddin*, 1920s, 1 NL Müller-Werth 1199/34, HHStAW; Friedrich Rosen, 1926, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte I*, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 49, 74.

²³ Richard von Kühlmann, *Suite de S.M.J. le Schah*, 7 April 1902, I 10122.02, R 131735, PA AA.

²⁴ The Italian king had told Wedel about the gun. Karl von Wedel to Bernhard von Bülow, 24 May 1902, R 19075, PA AA.

²⁵ Calmard, “*Atābak-e A’ẓam, Amīn-al-Solṭān*”; Friedrich Rosen, Note, 1 September 1901, A 12651, R 19082, PA AA; Mehrdad Amanat, “*Eḥtešām-al-Saltāna*.”

²⁶ Heinrich von Tschirschky to Mahmud Khan Qajar Ehtesham es-Saltaneh, 25 May 1902, I 13318, R 131735, PA AA.

mans in Basel on 27 May. The two German generals made an impression, and Mozaffar ed-Din remembered that he had met Rosen, the “deputy” of the German foreign minister, before in Tehran. He was a “very good person”.²⁷ Apart from conversing with the Shah, Rosen had to carry out symbolic and substantial tasks en route to Berlin. Just like the Iranians, who arrived with boxes full of medals to be awarded to German officials, the German ceremonial masters had compiled several page-long lists of the Iranian officials participating in the journey, which rank they held at the Iranian court, how much power they exerted and how they positioned themselves towards Germany. Another matter important for the accurate decoration was whether German honours had been bestowed on the Iranian officials in the past and which medals other European states awarded to them.²⁸

There was nothing culturally specific to the exchange of gifts or decorations, but the practice of awarding medals had been adopted by the Qajar rulers in the early nineteenth century as diplomatic interactions with European states increased.²⁹ This gift-making was important, as the rank of one order or the other signified the stature of the endowed official. Honours were often publicly announced and diplomatic staffs of the various countries exchanged such information as markers of diplomatic relations. The higher up the decorated official was placed the more symbolically significant was the honour received for the quality of the relations of the two medal-exchanging countries.

In the case of the embattled Iran, this symbolism also expressed an assignment of international sovereignty and could have ramifications on a ruler's or minister's internal legitimacy. Accurate decoration was an important matter and Rosen returned to the issue of honouring the Persian guests repeatedly throughout the visit. While the Shah's train rattled to Berlin last corrections were made. There had been uncertainty as to what medal the Shah's Sadr Azam Amin as-Sultan should receive. Rosen wired that Amin as-Sultan had, just like the Shah, received the Annunciation medal in Rome, but the first class Roter Adler Orden that would have been appropriate turned out to have already been awarded during the 1889 visit. Eventually, he received the first class Kronenorden.³⁰

27 [Mozaffar ed-Din Shah], *Duvvumin Safarnama-yi Muzaffar al-Din Shah bih Farang* [in Persian] (Tehran: Kavush, 1982), 54; Jalali, *Erani in Berlin*, 36.

28 Decorations Lists, July 1902, Abtheilung I B, PA AA; Motadel, “Qajar Shahs in Imperial Germany,” 213.

29 Motadel, “Qajar Shahs in Imperial Germany,” 217.

30 *Deutscher Reichs-Anzeiger und Königlich Preußischer Staats-Anzeiger* 209 (5 September 1902); Friedrich Rosen to AA, 28 May 1902, I 13749, R 131735, PA AA; Wilhelm II and Bernhard von

This symbolic German effort stood in marked contrast to the handling of these ceremonies in London later that summer. The British envoy to Tehran, Arthur Hardinge, who battled for Britain's influence in the country and had been conspiring with Amin as-Sultan's opponents to topple the Sadr Azam, had in a sign of non-confidence let the Germans know in advance that the Persians were not going to receive any medals in London, but would merely be awarded other gifts, such as pictures. This lack of symbolic decoration was a planned insult, which the Shah understood as such. He had expected to be awarded the highest order of British knighthood, but he was denied the Order of the Garter on account of being a Muslim. This provoked a scene at the British court. When the Shah protested against the slight, he was told that the Ottoman Sultan had not received the Order of the Garter either. The Shah retorted that he had also not massacred the Armenians but given them shelter. The German representatives in Iran understood this as a failure in Hardinge's planning.³¹ However, the scandal was intended as a brusque dressing-down of the Iranians for having joined the side of Russia and at the same time sought to demonstrate to worried Russia that Britain was not pursuing a closer relationship with the Shah. The goal was to weaken the Shah and his government.³² In contrast, German observance of ceremonial protocol, not least because of Rosen's interventions, signalled friendlier motives.

From Mulhouse Rosen wired Berlin that the Shah had expressed his wish to visit – like his father – the factories of Krupp in Essen. The Shah asked that a visit should be combined with meeting the owner on his onward journey from Berlin to France. Rosen had been involved in Iranian military requests in the 1890s and had translated Naser ed-Din Shah's 1873 descriptions of Germany, including his visit to Essen. He knew that the stop in Essen was not supposed to be merely an informative visit.³³ The German government did not shut down the request, but forwarded it without much comment to Krupp, who conveniently an-

Bülów, Note, 30 May 1902, 36013, R 131735, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to G.L. von Eichborn, 16 May 1902, 11606, R 131735, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Note, 1 June 1902, I 14181, R 131735, PA AA; Wilhelm II and Bernhard von Bülow, Note, 11 June 1902, I 15183, R 131735, PA AA.

³¹ von Kühlmann, Suite de S.M.J. le Schah; Calmard, "Atābak-e A'ẓam, Amin-al-Solṭān"; Motadel, "Qajar Shahs in Imperial Germany," 191; Arthur von Rex to Bernhard von Bülow, 20 November 1902, A 17278, R 19058, PA AA; Rose Greaves, "Iranian Relations with Great Britain and British India, 1798 – 1921," in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, Peter Avery, Gavin Hambly, and Charles Melville (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 414.

³² "England and Persia," *The Levant Herald*, 3 September 1902; "The Situation in Persia," *The Globe*, 15 August 1902.

³³ Friedrich Rosen to AA, 28 May 1902, I 13749, R 131735, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, *Neupersischer Sprachführer*, 144 – 45; Yorulmaz, *Arming the Sultan*, 318.

swered that to his “deep regret a reception of his majesty was impossible” as the Krupp villa was under construction. The Shah could visit the factory, if he liked.³⁴ The message was clear. A visit would not lead to the purchase of weapons and Essen did not make the itinerary of the Persians for its sights.³⁵ What would have been a first defeat for the Iranian side was not linked as much to matters of culture or understanding, but to economic considerations of Krupp. The Shah’s coffers were – despite a new loan of Russia – perennially empty and arms exports to Iran risky. That the request was made already en route to Berlin would have had to do with the presence of the arbiter Rosen, who portrayed sympathy for the Iranian side, but who could not single-handedly bring about a weapons sale without severely compromising his position in the *Auswärtiges Amt*.

The Shah arrived in the residence city of Potsdam on 29 May at 6 p.m. where he was greeted by the Kaiser. The two rulers boarded a carriage that followed half a regiment of the Kaiser’s elite Gardes du Corps. They were flanked by members of the Kaiser’s court on horseback and followed by the second half of the Gardes du Corps. The two thus sufficiently glorified regents were followed by four high placed German military figures and behind by Amin as-Sultan, the German state secretary Oswald von Richthofen, Ehtesham es-Saltaneh and Rosen. The Iranian envoy and the German Orient official were certainly on par, but it is noteworthy that the Persian prime minister was not met by chancellor Bernhard von Bülow, but only by the state secretary.³⁶ During the short ride from the train station to Sanssouci Palace the two rulers would not have exchanged much more than pleasantries. Mozaffar ed-Din’s French was limited and Rosen had advised that he should not talk with Wilhelm in French directly to avoid embarrassment.³⁷ At Sanssouci the Shah and his entourage were welcomed at the Orangerie, where the Shah was housed, by a large guard of honour with the national anthem *Salamat-i Shah* playing and the Persian banner hoisted at the time of the Shah’s arrival.³⁸ As Rosen noted, the Orangerie had been picked as an abode for the Shah, as it was thought that there the Iranians would not get the chance to “break too much”.

34 Friedrich Alfred Krupp to Oswald von Richthofen, 29 May 1902, I 13801, R 131735, PA AA.

35 [Mozaffar ed-Din Shah], *Duvvumin Safarnama*.

36 Friedrich Rosen, *Shumā Farsī hārf mizānīd (Sprechen Sie Persisch?): neupersischer Sprachführer, für die Reise und zum Selbstunterricht enthaltend eine kurze Grammatik, Wörtersammlung, Gespräche und Lesestücke* (Berlin: Ferd. Dümmlers Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1925), 138.

37 Friedrich Rosen, Besuch Schah Muzaffar eddin, 1920s, 1 NL Müller-Werth 1199/34, HHStAW.

38 Programm für die Anwesenheit Seiner Majestät des Schah von Persien, 29 May 1902, I 13746, R 131735, PA AA.

It was a warm spring day and the citrus trees were in full blossom, and while alighting from the carriage, the Kaiser explained to the Shah through Rosen's interpretation that he had him housed in the Orangerie because he had heard that Persians liked parks and gardens. The Kaiser reminisced that father Naser ed-Din had liked Potsdam's gardens and that Mozaffar ed-Din should have a look around. The Shah replied that he did not need to explore the garden, "as the honourable and gracious reception that his royal highness the Kaiser had welcomed me with is for me park and garden". Mozaffar's answer, in which Rosen perceived a reference to Sa'di's poetry, in an instant won over the Kaiser, who immediately began talking in similar pictorial language. "The magic of the Orient had seized him", Rosen found with a sense of relief.³⁹

Things were off to a good start between the two rulers. Rosen interpreted the speeches of the Shah and the Kaiser, in which the Kaiser thanked the Shah for his visit and expressed his pleasure in Iranian-German relations being at their best. The Shah responded by thanking the Kaiser for the friendly reception and expressing his wish that God saw Iranian-German relations strengthening even further, and raised his glass in a toast to the Kaiser – a departure from Iranian ceremonial. Rosen recorded both speeches, had the versions approved by Amin as-Sultan and sent them to the chancellery to keep Bülow informed.⁴⁰ Shortly after, the Shah briefly visited the Kaiser at the Neues Palais, but ate by himself in the Orangerie that evening. Already in Rome the Shah had wanted to eat alone according to his "Asiatic manners", that is without cutlery, as the German envoy Wedel had reported.⁴¹ Although European-style banquets had been introduced in Iran under Mozaffar ed-Din, the practice of eating with hands while sitting on the ground came more naturally to the Shah. The next morning, Mozaffar ed-Din travelled by special train to Berlin to join the Kaiser in inspecting a military parade on the Tempelhofer Feld. The skies were clear and the Shah, whose health had been impaired for years, suffered from the heat and the dusty field. Against etiquette, Rosen organised a carafe of water to stabilise the Shah's perseverance. The following reception at the Berlin Stadtschloss further fatigued the Shah, who asked Rosen why everyone was always standing. An "alte Hofsitte" (old etiquette of the court), Rosen explained. Moreover, the consumption of "Sekt und Säfte" (sparkling wines and juices) and the absence of water was odd to the Shah.⁴² Rosen and Amin as-Sultan, aware that

39 Friedrich Rosen, *Besuch Schah Muzaffar eddin*, 1920s, 1 NL Müller-Werth 1199/34, HHStAW.

40 Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 30 May 1902, I 13988, R 131735, PA AA.

41 Programm für Schah von Persien, 29 May 1902, I 13746, R 131735, PA AA; Karl von Wedel to Bernhard von Bülow, 24 May 1902, R 19075, PA AA.

42 Programm für Schah von Persien, 29 May 1902, I 13746, R 131735, PA AA.

more breaking of etiquette would be frowned upon, did their best to keep the Shah on course.

In another instance at the reception Rosen was concerned that his sovereign would stumble into a cultural faux-pas. The Kaiser was much enthused at the time by the research of Friedrich Delitzsch, who stipulated that Mosaic law originated in Babylonian scriptures, perceived Assyrian culture superior to that of the Old Testament and later thought Jesus to exhibit Aryan characteristics. On the occasion of the Shah's visit newspaper articles had elevated the Persians onto a common ground with Germany due to supposedly shared Aryan origins, and Wilhelm, who was interested in "finding a bridge, to comprehend the influence of the East on the West in cultural terms", mirrored this notion of kinship. Bringing up Delitzsch's studies, the Kaiser thought could interest the Shah due to the "territorial continuity" of ancient Babylon and modern Iran.⁴³ Rosen was mostly concerned that the Kaiser would offend the "strictly Shi'ite Shah" with his talk of the unenlightened jahili past, but the Shah just listened politely. In a conversation with crown princess Luise about recent German Orientalist scholarship the Shah stood his ground, portraying civilised modernity in talking to a woman.⁴⁴

The Shah did not express any further interest in the Hohenzollerns' obsessions with the ancient East and did not grab the opportunity of leveraging German interests for arranging an archaeological agreement. Rosen had known of archaeological deals the Iranian government had made with France in the 1890s, had personally met the French excavators of Susa, Jane and Marcel-Auguste Dieulafoy, in Paris in 1893 and knew of the political relevance an excavation treaty could carry. The Kaiser's interest in Delitzsch's research was well-known and considering that Delitzsch had updated Rosen on his travels in the Ottoman Empire in the months before the visit of the Shah, the topic was not new to the Orient-man of the Auswärtiges Amt.⁴⁵ That the topic came up in

⁴³ Wilhelm II, *Ereignisse und Gestalten aus den Jahren 1878–1918* (Wolfenbüttel: Melchior, 2008), 168; David Motadel, "Iran and the Aryan Myth," in *Perceptions of Iran. History, Myths and Nationalism from Medieval Persia to the Islamic Republic*, Ali M. Ansari (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014), 124; Suzanne Marchand, "German Orientalism and the Decline of the West," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 145, no. 4 (December 2001): 468–89.

⁴⁴ [Mozaffar ed-Din Shah], *Duvvumin Safarnama*, 58; Friedrich Rosen, *Besuch Schah Muzaffar eddin*, 1920s, 1 NL Müller-Werth 1199/34, HHStAW.

⁴⁵ Friedrich Delitzsch to Friedrich Rosen, 24 February 1902, 1901–5, ASWPC; Friedrich Delitzsch to Friedrich Rosen, 26 February 1902, 1901–5, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen, 1926, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte I*, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 84; Axel Heimsoth, "Die Bagdadbahn und die Archäologie. Wirtschaftliche und wissenschaftliche Planungen im Osmanischen Reich," in

the conversation between the Kaiser and the Shah at a gala dinner should thus not have surprised Rosen. As his estimation of the primacy of religious sensitivities shows, he had not counselled the Shah on the matter or any other potential archaeological undertakings. Whether he avoided this out of a misplaced religious sensitivity or simply did not want to offer the Persians a way of attracting German attention out of fear of upsetting the French who had gained an excavation monopoly in Persia in 1900, in this situation Rosen did not improve the Shah's hand.⁴⁶

The opera performance, a mixture of Orientalist themes of *Aida* and European motives such as *Carmen*, that evening the Shah left early as the air in the opera house was too stuffy. It is doubtful that Rosen could have arranged for a discreet departure of the Shah from an exposed balcony. The next day, 1 June, saw another parade and carriage ride in Potsdam with a further luncheon at the Neues Palais and a viewing of the different rooms. In the afternoon the Shah, a passionate hunter, went deer hunting with Rosen, who told him of his travels in northern India. The roebuck the Shah shot was taxidermied and taken back to Iran.⁴⁷

Occupying the Shah with ceremonial, socialising and sight-seeing was reflective of the German government's hesitance of entering substantive talks on further cooperation. The Shah "teased the grand vezier, because he negotiated trade deals with the ministry" as he was visiting Berlin's zoo and aquarium.⁴⁸ The Sadr Azam thought that the development of German interests in his country would countervail growing Russian influence. The British envoy Hardinge had shown himself "more incompetent" in balancing out Russian influence than his predecessors, and he hoped that the Germans would fill the void. No major trade deals were signed, but while the Shah was busy with entertainments, the conversations the Sadr Azam conducted at Wilhelmstrasse encouraged further German business engagement in Iran, as Rosen penned down in an internal note a month later. Prompted by the Iranian envoy Ehtesham es-Saltaneh, Rosen also informed the Auswärtiges Amt that the Shah had asked the Kaiser in a conversation to sell him twelve machine guns but Rosen's note was of as little consequence as had been the earlier entreaties of the Iran for

Das große Spiel. Archäologie und Politik zur Zeit des Kolonialismus (1860–1940), Charlotte Trümpler (Essen: Ruhr Museum, 2008), 363; Röhl, *Der Weg in den Abgrund*, 563.

⁴⁶ Litten, *Persien "pénétration pacifique"*, 197; [Mozaffar ed-Din Shah], *Duvvumin Safarnama*, 57.

⁴⁷ Programm für Schah von Persien, 29 May 1902, I 13746, R 131735, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Besuch Schah Muzaffar eddin, 1920s, 1 NL Müller-Werth 1199/34, HHStAW; [Mozaffar ed-Din Shah], *Duvvumin Safarnama*, 57.

⁴⁸ Friedrich Rosen, Besuch Schah Muzaffar eddin, 1920s, 1 NL Müller-Werth 1199/34, HHStAW.

weapons. Though smitten by the Oriental sovereign and his flowery language, Wilhelm saw no reason to become politically involved in the disintegrating state. Similarly, the German chancellor wanted to increase exports, and trade would in fact increase significantly in the following years, but neither Bülow nor Holstein had any interest in being drawn into Russia's and Britain's Iranian game.⁴⁹

This limited interest also became apparent in the following months, as the journey of the Shah and his entourage continued across Europe. While the Shah was taking baths for his health in French Contrexéville, Rosen was contacted by the Iranian minister of public works Mukhbir es-Saltaneh – also part of the Persian travelling group – with the idea that the Shah would establish an iron ore factory in Tehran in order to industrialise Iran, allow for its own machinery production and thus become less reliant on expensive import. Rosen was asked if he could not bring together a group of German industrialists that would construct such an industry in Iran. To connect the factory to the grid, railway concessions would also be a possibility, Mukhbir es-Saltaneh noted. If the Germans were interested, an engineer should simply be sent to Contrexéville to talk over the details. Germany could have the railway concession right away. At the time on summer holidays in Belgium, Rosen forwarded the request to the Auswärtiges Amt, only noting that the absence of forests in the vicinity of Tehran and scarcity of wood would complicate railway constructions.⁵⁰ Persian wooing again did not provoke German interest in closer involvement and Rosen did not become active in attracting German industrialists on his own.

Despite the shortfall in concrete results, the visit was perceived as successful by both sides. As Mozaffar ed-Din Shah crossed Germany again after a stay in the Carlsbad spa, he wired Wilhelm his thanks for “the cordial and kind reception that I found” which was now eternally engraved in his heart. The Kaiser replied that his visit to Potsdam “caused my veritable joy” and that also the empress fondly remembered him. In his continuing efforts to extend symbolic capital Rosen had recommended that the Kaiser should, if he intended to wish the Shah farewell, give as a courtesy his greetings to the Iranian crown prince. In following Rosen's advice, the Kaiser extended royal recognition to the Shah's son, which was in consideration of the Shah's weak health symbolically impor-

⁴⁹ Friedrich Rosen, Note, 6 July 1902, A 10381, R 19088, PA AA; Heinrich von Tschirschky to German Embassies in London and St. Petersburg, 28 July 1906, A 112624, R 19088, PA AA; Litten, *Persien “pénétration pacifique”*, 217–22; Martin, *German-Persian Diplomatic Relations*, 61–62.

⁵⁰ Friedrich Rosen, Auszug aus einem Briefe des Persischen Ministers Mukhbir es Saltane an W.L.R. Rosen, 25 July 1902, 11326, R 18984, PA AA.



Fig. 4.1. Mozaffar ed-Din Shah in the Orangerie near Potsdam, May 1902. Standing behind the Shah from the right: Ehtesham es-Saltaneh, Lothar von Trotha, Viktor von Lignitz, Amin as-Sultan and Friedrich Rosen.

tant for the continuation of the Qajar dynasty.⁵¹ On the way back from England later that summer, the Shah crossed Germany one last time. The evening before arriving in Berlin, Ehtesham es-Saltaneh informed Rosen that the Shah would travel through the German capital incognito. Police protection was hastily arranged and Rosen and state secretary Richthofen went to the train station to exchange greetings one last time. Courtesies aside, the Iranians knew that they could not expect much more from the Germans.⁵²

As Rosen continued dealing with issues surrounding the Baghdad railway, he had proven himself a reliable diplomat in the eyes of the *Auswärtiges Amt*, the chancellery and the Kaiser, whom he came to see more often in the following months. On the Iranian side, the visit to Germany brought mixed results. As Rex

⁵¹ Mozaffar ed-Din Shah to Wilhelm II, 8 June 1902, I 14411, R 131735, PA AA; Wilhelm II to Mozaffar Ed-Shah, 8 June 1902, I 14411, R 131735, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Note, 1 June 1902, I 14181, R 131735, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 1 June 1902, I 14975, R 131735, PA AA.

⁵² Friedrich Rosen and Oswald von Richthofen to Heinrich von Tschirschky, 16 September 1902, A 13747, R 19075, PA AA; Oswald von Richthofen to Wilhelm II, 15 September 1902, I 24088, R 131735, PA AA; Mozaffar ed-Din Shah to Wilhelm II, 16 September 1902, A 13892, R 19075, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Note, 14 September 1902, I 23856, R 131735, PA AA.

reported upon the Shah's arrival back in Tehran in November, the "highlight of this year's Shah-trip was the visit in Berlin". The Shah had been impressed by the gardens, display of German troops, and enjoyed the "graciousness" of the Kaiser. Britain, in contrast, had been a "bitter disappointment".⁵³ Most significantly though, the trip had not led to the stabilisation of the country. Encouraging signals from Germany did not translate into any concrete commitments that could compensate British slack. Even the Dutch committed themselves more by sending an engineer to take over constructions of a dam on the Karun river.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, the Iranians did not leave Germany entirely empty-handed. The royal visit had happened, which was a first victory, and there had been no embarrassing incidents to mention. The exchanges with the German regent were amiable, relations with the German government had been strengthened and press coverage had been positive. The care with which medals were exchanged and the greetings relayed to the crown prince were also a good sign for potential future exchanges. However, though signalling accommodation to German business interests, in practical terms Iran had not gained what it wanted. Requests to purchase weapons were nipped in the bud, mining and railway concessions were rejected, and a formal trade deal was also not concluded.

Whether Mozaffar ed-Din did not grasp the severity of his position, as Rosen suggested, or if the Shah was, as the archival documents show, in fact pursuing the survival of his dynasty and the integrity of his country to the best of his circumscribed abilities with the assistance of Amin as-Sultan, the international recognition he took back with him to Iran did not compensate for the cost of the trip or insulate his country from the further machinations of the British and Russian envoys in Tehran. The Shah had been received by Germany, but the Kaiser and the German government would not make a stance on the side of the Iranians. The trip had cost money, and soon it became clear that the majority of the twelve million ruble loan the Russians had given the Iranians just months before had been spent. Moreover, in his absence from Iran the British had further agitated against the Sadr Azam. When unrest spread in several Iranian cities in the summer of 1903, Rosen could read in the newspapers that his erstwhile partner Amin as-Sultan had been excommunicated by the 'ulema and was shortly later dismissed.⁵⁵ Germany on the other hand had received what it wanted: a friendly business environment in Iran. The visit had been painless to the Kaiser, in no small part because Rosen had proved to be a careful and trustworthy language

⁵³ Arthur von Rex to Bernhard von Bülow, 20 November 1902, A 17278, R 19058, PA AA.

⁵⁴ Litten, *Persien "pénétration pacifique"*, 86–87.

⁵⁵ Calmard, "Atābake A'ẓam, Amin-al-Solṭān"; "Die Verfluchung des ehemaligen Sadrazam von Persien," *St. Petersburger Zeitung*, 24 December 1903.

and culture interpreter for both sides. The Kaiser even took a liking to the Iranian man he had not wanted to meet. A plethora of German officials from high up to low down could pin an exotic medal of a sun shining over a lion onto their waistcoats, and the public spectacle was equally successful.

The engagement of Rosen as an intermediary had been a sensible choice by the Iranians, but beyond facilitating a gain in symbolic currency, Rosen's abilities were either overestimated by the Iranians or they were clutching at straws, and Rosen was as good as it got. By channelling much of the high-level engagements through Rosen, Mozaffar ed-Din, Amin as-Sultan and Ehtesham es-Saltaneh had picked the most suitable person, who had demonstrated his goodwill in the past. Their inquiries with Rosen throughout the summer also show that Rosen was not perceived as detrimental to their mission. The Shah reiterated in his travel diary that Rosen was a "very good person" and spoke "Persian very well".⁵⁶ Rosen's language abilities and background knowledge facilitated easy approach and conviviality. By maintaining his friendliness towards the Iranian interlocutors, he signalled that approaching him again and again would not hurt. However, Rosen either assigned a determining quality to the Shah's Muslim faith, or decided to withhold from the Shah for any number of reasons his knowledge about the political potential the Orientalist interests of the Kaiser could have for engaging Germany more forcefully in Iran and thus prop up the embattled Qajar court. In the matters of weapons and concessions Rosen carried out his duty of relaying requests, but did not exert himself beyond his means. Through the trust the Iranians placed in him, Rosen got the opportunity to demonstrate his ability and loyalty to his superiors. While there may have been an element of Rosen leading on his Iranian friends for his personal gain, his relations with his Iranian partners continued without strain.⁵⁷ Considering what was at stake and how desperate the situation had become for Iran at the eve of the Constitutional Revolution in 1905, Mozaffar ed-Din Shah and his Sadr Azam Amin as-Sultan maximised their gains in Germany with the help of Rosen. Tragically, the most tangible prey they took back with them from Germany was a taxidermied roebuck.

⁵⁶ [Mozaffar ed-Din Shah], *Duvvumin Safarnama*, 58.

⁵⁷ Mozaffar ed-Din Shah to Friedrich Rosen, 1905, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Heinrich von Tschirsky to AA, 26 August 1905, I 24088, R 131735, PA AA; Motadel, "Qajar Shahs in Imperial Germany," 210.

3 Application, Creation and Sharing of Knowledge. Establishing Diplomatic Relations with Emperor Menelik II of Ethiopia in 1905

In the period 1871–1883, Ethiopian-German relations were characterised by Ethiopia seeking moral and diplomatic support from Germany and other European countries against Egyptian territorial encroachment “first on grounds of common religion and eventually on the basis of the so-called humanitarian policy of the European powers themselves.” Emperor Yohannes IV (r. 1871–1889) had hoped that European control of the Red Sea would help him against his Muslim neighbours in Sudan and along the Somali coast, but his hopes were soon disappointed when the European powers excluded Ethiopia from weapons sales.⁵⁸ The German government reacted evasively to Ethiopian overtures. A German mission led by the explorer Gerhard Rohlfs to the court of Yohannes did not result in political collaboration, despite Yohannes requesting Rohlfs to become his chief negotiator with Egypt. Germany saw no incentive to become involved in the Franco-English rivalry over the lands along the two Niles.⁵⁹ When Germany, Italy and Austria-Hungary signed the Triple Alliance signed in 1882, Germany became even more hesitant towards Ethiopian overtures and favoured the establishment of an Italian protectorate over Ethiopia.⁶⁰

After the death of Yohannes in 1889, the previous Ras (prince) Menelik II of the province of Shoa (Sheva) seized the Ethiopian throne. In his campaign for the throne Menelik had signed a treaty with the Italians at Wuchale, in which Ethiopia forewent claims in Eritrea and Italy in the Ethiopian highlands. The treaty came in Italian and Amharic versions. The Italian version included a passage that stipulated that all Ethiopian correspondence with the European powers

58 Tafla, *Ethiopia and Germany*, 76; Nicola Storti and G. Joseph Negoussie, “La missione umanitaria di Leone XIII presso Menelik II nel 1896, alla luce dei documenti Vaticani,” *Africa: Rivista trimestrale di studi e documentazione dell'Istituto italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente* 40, no. 4 (December 1985): 542–76; Wolbert G.C. Smidt, “British Colonialism in the Horn of Africa,” in *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica. A Reference Work on the Horn of Africa*, vol. 5, Siegbert Uhlig and Alessandro Bausi (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010), 1028.

59 Yohannes IV to Wilhelm I, 10 August 1872, A 3021, R 14885, PA AA; Gerhard Rohlfs, *Meine Mission nach Abessinien. Auf Befehl Sr. Maj. des deutschen Kaisers im Winter 1880/81 unternommen* (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1883); Bairu Tafla, “Rohlfs, Gerhard,” in *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica. A Reference Work on the Horn of Africa*, vol. 4, Siegbert Uhlig and Alessandro Bausi (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010), 408.

60 Tafla, *Ethiopia and Germany*, 75.

would henceforth have to be relayed via Italy. By handing over its channels of communication, Ethiopia had without its own knowledge become in the eyes of European governments an Italian protectorate.⁶¹ In January 1890 Menelik II wrote directly to the German government, expressing the desire to continue friendly relations, solidarity among “all unfairly oppressed people” and asking for help in having the weapons embargo lifted. As Menelik had not used the good offices of Italy as stipulated at Wuchale, the Italian press was up in arms. Germany did not want to upset its Italian ally and drafted in collaboration with Italian diplomats a friendly but noncommittal response. The Italian diplomatic service relayed the letter of Wilhelm II to the Ethiopians.⁶² After finding a similar reception in other European states, Ethiopia unilaterally revoked the Treaty of Wuchale in 1893 which led to war between Italy and Ethiopia in 1896 and the crushing defeat of the Italian forces at Adua near the Eritrean border. The Ethiopian victory over the Italians, including the capture of thousands of Italian soldiers, was suffered in Italy as an insult to national pride and reverberated around the world, demonstrating to many in Africa, Asia and America that European conquest domination was not inevitable.⁶³

Although the mountainous and landlocked Ethiopia lacked an effective road or railway system the country had seen the influx of merchants, missionaries, and explorers from Europe, Arabia, Turkey, Armenia and India in the nineteenth century, tying the country into the global market of wares and ideas.⁶⁴ Already before becoming Negus Negesti, the king of kings, Menelik had been an avid moderniser and technology aficionado in his province of Shoa. Like his second in command, the general Ras Makonnen, Menelik had cultivated relations with the European powers before 1889, skilfully playing off the Europeans against Yohannes, amassing European weapons and expanding his basis of power and territorial control. After victory at Adua, Menelik exclaimed “What kind of fools are there in Europe? Why! Do they make their weapons of death and give them to us? With guns which they have brought, with cartridges that they have brought Menelik has roasted and exploded the foreign barley.”⁶⁵ Marrying Taitu Betul, who commanded a power basis in the northern region around Gondar, Taitu and Me-

61 Christopher Clapham, “Mənilək II,” in *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica. A Reference Work on the Horn of Africa*, vol. 3, Siegbert Uhlig (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2007), 924.

62 Tafla, *Ethiopia and Germany*, 91–92.

63 Raymond Jonas, *The Battle of Adwa. African Victory in the Age of Empire* (Cambridge, MS: Belknap Press, 2011).

64 Pankhurst, “Foundation of Addis Ababa,” 109.

65 Clapham, “Mənilək II,” 923; Marcus, *Menelik II and Ethiopia*, 174; Avishai Ben-Dror, “Arthur Rimbaud in Harär: Images, Reality, Memory,” *Northeast African Studies* 14, no. 2 (2014): 159–82.

nelik became a formidable ruling couple. Menelik and Taitu sought to establish a modern empire and imported European technology and those who mastered its application. Particularly important became a Swiss engineer by the name of Alfred Ilg, who had joined Menelik in Shoa in 1879. Ilg became Menelik's trusted advisor on matters of public construction and trade, and acted by the 1890s as his de facto secretary of state.⁶⁶ After the revocation of Wuchale in 1896, Ilg organised a publicity campaign in Europe to raise the profile of his chief, and Ethiopia entered diplomatic relations with France, Russia, and England in the late 1890s. Humiliated Italy also opened a legation in the by Menelik and Taitu newly established capital Addis Ababa.⁶⁷

Menelik was interested in "attracting as many foreign powers as possible for reasons of political expediency", as Tafla notes, but Germany maintained its distance from Ethiopia and continued to rely on Italy for correspondence. In 1901, Menelik wrote to Wilhelm to offer trade relations and to have his sovereignty recognised by another European power. The Kaiser was interested and Italy signalled no objections, but Bülow thought it prudent to wait. Ethiopia's profile was rising. A number of German and Austrian scholarly expeditions to the Horn of Africa had popularised the region and businessmen, like the sugar industrialist and ethnologist Max Schoeller of German East Africa, were interested in Ethiopia's resources – particularly its coffee beans.⁶⁸ Most persistent in lobbying was Arnold Holtz, a German adventurer with ties to the colonialist Aldeutsche circles. Holtz began approaching the Auswärtiges Amt in 1901 for support with his business ventures in Ethiopia. But due to the bad accessibility, doubts as to the real economic benefits and continued fears of upsetting Italy, Holtz was kept on standby.⁶⁹ The German government only threw its reservations overboard after a US delegation travelled to Ethiopia to enter a trade deal in 1903 and the

⁶⁶ Clapham, "Mənilək II," 923; Jonas, *Battle of Adwa*, 13.

⁶⁷ Marcus, *Menelik II and Ethiopia*, 179; Pankhurst, "Foundation of Addis Ababa"; Robert Chauvelot, *Un grand politique, S. M. l'empereur Ménélik II, roi des rois d'Éthiopie. Conférence prononcée à l'École des Sciences Politiques (Section Diplomatique)* (Paris: Francis Laur, 1899), 15–19; Jonas, *Battle of Adwa*, 271; "Convention with the Negus," *Egyptian Gazette*, 30 July 1903; Tafla, *Ethiopia and Germany*, 92.

⁶⁸ Tafla, *Ethiopia and Germany*, 99–102; Richard Goodmann, "Arthur Rimbaud, Coffee Trader," *Saudi Aramco World* 52, no. 5 (September 2001): 8–15.

⁶⁹ Friedrich Rosen, *Aufzeichnung über Arnold Holtz*, 12 July 1905, A 12285, R 14915, PA AA; Arnold Holtz to Arthur von Zimmermann, 1 September 1903, A 10947, R 14891, PA AA; Arnold Holtz to AA, 30 October 1903, A 16121, R 14891, PA AA; Arnold Holtz to AA, 3 November 1903, A 16403, R 14891, PA AA; Inhouse Report, 5 August 1903, R 14891, PA AA; Hermann Speck von Sternburg to Bernhard von Bülow, 17 October 1903, A 222, R 14891, PA AA; Zimen, *Rosen für den Negus*, 10–21.

newspapers reported at length on the economic potential of Ethiopia and US “participation in ‘Weltpolitik’”.⁷⁰

With Ethiopia considered part of the Orient, Holtz’s inquiries fell on Rosen’s desk. The other parcel of the Ethiopia portfolio were a number of reports from Jerusalem, Constantinople and Cairo about Ethiopia trying to (re)claim the Deir es-Sultan monastery adjacent to the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem from the Coptic Church. This was complicated by the Coptic Patriarch of Alexandria appointing the Abuna (primate) of the Ethiopian Church and the leader of the Church thus often not pursuing the same goals as the Ethiopian government. Negotiations had come to naught and Empress Taitu’s visit to Jerusalem in 1904 also did not result in the hoped-for success.⁷¹ From 1903 on, Rosen read most of the economic, religious and political reports and inquiries concerning Ethiopia, but had not become active on the country in any major capacity. Just as an Ottoman mission to Addis Ababa passed the Suez Canal in May 1904, the Auswärtiges Amt started moving and under secretaries of state Oswald von Richthofen and Otto von Mühlberg sought to get a German mission to Ethiopia underway.⁷²

Richthofen, Mühlberg and Rosen likely came up with the idea together.⁷³ Rosen privately discussed establishing diplomatic relations with Mühlberg, who had been on the Orient desk before Rosen. Mühlberg told Rosen that an expedition to Ethiopia “would make a good impression with the public.” In May 1904 Rosen spoke with the explorer and ornithologist Carlo von Erlanger about a potential mission. Erlanger had travelled Ethiopia between 1899 and 1901, where he captured 8,000 birds, spent several months at the court of Menelik, and made the acquaintance of Ilg. The young bird-collector suggested to Rosen that a diplomatic mission to Ethiopia would prove a success. The recently signed Franco-British Entente had the French decrease their influence in the re-

70 “American Aspirations. Mission to Abyssinia,” *The Morning*, 22 September 1903; “Encore un rival,” *Gil Blas*, 18 September 1903; “Trade Possibilities in Abyssinia,” *Egyptian Gazette*, 9 June 1904; Marcus, *Menelik II and Ethiopia*, 198; Martin Rücker Freiherr von Jenisch to Bernhard von Bülow, 27 June 1904, A 11126, R 14891, PA AA; Martin Rücker Freiherr von Jenisch to Bernhard von Bülow, 28 December 1904, A 8995, R 14892, PA AA.

71 Edmund Schmidt to Bernhard von Bülow, 24 May 1904, A9525, R 14891, PA AA; Martin Rücker Freiherr von Jenisch to Bernhard von Bülow, 31 May 1904, A 8994, R 14891, PA AA; Bernhard von Bülow to Wilhelm II, 28 August 1904, A 13772, R 14891, PA AA; “Eine Pilgerfahrt der Kaiserin von Abessinien nach Jerusalem,” *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 1 June 1904.

72 Martin Rücker Freiherr von Jenisch to Bernhard von Bülow, 21 May 1904, A 260, R 14891, PA AA; Martin Rücker Freiherr von Jenisch to Bernhard von Bülow, 28 December 1904, A 8995, R 14892, PA AA.

73 Tafla notes that the driving force was Richthofen alone. Tafla, *Ethiopia and Germany*, 98.

gion, which could provide an opening for Germany, and allow it to draw closer to both Russian and Italian interests in the country.⁷⁴ The idea was endorsed by Wilhelm in late August. Bülow first brought up the matter with Wilhelm on 26 August and sent him a detailed report on Ethiopian Church interests in Jerusalem on 28 August, suggesting that Bülow tried to pique the Kaiser's interest on the matter on a religious basis.⁷⁵

German motivations were interlaced. After a series of states had entered diplomatic relations with Ethiopia, the German government no longer wanted to look like it was holding back. Secondly, signing a trade treaty and "opening up" Ethiopia to German economic interests allowed the government to point to its track record of supporting German exports in the public. In combination, these economic and political goals would also placate colonialist circles, who insisted on Bülow's making good on his place in the sun claim from 1897. The concrete goals of the mission were to negotiate a trade and friendship treaty and to further investigate economic opportunities, as business circles in the US continued to doubt trade prospects and Holtz's marketing was not trusted. Nothing indicates that at the outset the Auswärtiges Amt intended to make a show-case of diplomacy or international collaboration with France, Britain and Italy out of the expedition. But the German government demonstrated goodwill in informing the other interested European governments in London, Paris, Rome and Cairo of the expedition two months before its departure and sought permission from all to pass their territories into and out of Ethiopia. The line presented to the British,

⁷⁴ Erlanger suggested to Rosen that he would send a map of Ethiopia he had published with the Gesellschaft für Erdkunde (association for geography) in Berlin to Ilg and Menelik as a gift. It should be accompanied by a letter co-written with Rosen. Erlanger died in a car accident in the fall of 1904. Carlo von Erlanger to Friedrich Rosen, 13 June 1904, 1901–5, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen, 1926, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte I*, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 89; Carlo von Erlanger, "Am Hofe Kaiser Meneliks," *Die Woche* 3, no. 2 (1901): 1961–64; Carlo von Erlanger, "Bericht über meine Expedition in Nordost-Afrika in den Jahren 1899–1901," *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin*, no. 2 (1904): 89–117; "Verhandlungen der Gesellschaft. Allgemeine Sitzung vom 15. Oktober 1904," *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin*, no. 5 (1904): 553–57; Paul Sprigade, "Geographische Ergebnisse der Expedition von Carlo Frhr. v. Erlanger in Nordost-Afrika in den Jahren 1899–1901," *Zeitschrift der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin*, no. 2 (1904): 118–31.

⁷⁵ Tafla, *Ethiopia and Germany*, 98; Martin Rücker Freiherr von Jenisch to Bernhard von Bülow, 21 May 1904, A 260, R 14891, PA AA; Bernhard von Bülow to Wilhelm II, 27 November 1904, A 18642, R 14914, PA AA; Bernhard von Bülow to Wilhelm II, 28 August 1904, A 13772, R 14891, PA AA.

French and Italians was that Germany was in it for economic reasons and pursued no political interests.⁷⁶

As the planning of the expedition took on shape, the scope of German interests widened. Tasked with inquiring at the Ethiopian court, if a German delegation was to be received favourably, Holtz also pursued his own business interests. As representative of Krupp in Ethiopia, he arranged for the armament manufacturer to extend their catalogue to Menelik via the German delegation. As the emperor had expressed an interest in Krupp mountain guns before, a sample artillery piece could be sent to Ethiopia.⁷⁷

With the Kaiser's interest sparked in the religious relevance of Ethiopia, the expedition was infused with a more inquisitive dash. Menelik II claimed descent from Menelik I, the legendary son of Makeda aka Queen of Sheba and King Solomon. In the tenth century before Christ, Menelik I was supposed to have transported the Ark of the Covenant with divine help to Ethiopia, where it was since kept in its ancient capital Aksum. The hunt for the Ark of the Covenant was a common past-time of European adventurers, but Wilhelm's focus was directed by his intimus, the Protestant theologian Adolf von Harnack, towards finding manuscripts in Ethiopia that would shed light on the development of early Christianity.⁷⁸ Ethiopia, which had a long Jewish history, had become predominantly Christian in the fourth century. Harnack hypothesised that Ethiopian manuscripts would hold indications of early Christianity not recorded in Greek sources. For the purpose of finding out more, Harnack and Rosen arranged for the Bonn university librarian and student of Ge'ez (old Ethiopian) manuscripts, Johannes Flemming, to accompany the mission. With Germany's library collections lagging behind those in Paris and London, Flemming should get a purse of 10,000 Mark to buy old Ethiopian manuscripts.⁷⁹ A linked goal, Harnack suggest-

76 Otto von Mühlberg to von Jenisch, 22 November 1904, A 18306, R 14914, PA AA; Hugo von Radolin to AA, 17 November 1904, A 18070, R 14914, PA AA; Auswärtiges Amt to Hugo von Radolin, 17 November 1904, A 18070, R 14914, PA AA.

77 Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 2 March 1905, A5011, R 14892, PA AA; Otto Eccius to Friedrich Rosen, 20 December 1904, A 20016, R 14914, PA AA; von Erlanger, "Expedition in Nordost-Afrika 1899–1901," 104.

78 Enno Littmann, *The Legend of the Queen of Sheba in the Tradition of Axum* (Leiden: E.J. Brill & Princeton University Library, 1904); Röhl, *Der Aufbau der persönlichen Monarchie*, 1052–53; Matthias Steinbach, "Wilhelm II. und die Gelehrten: Aspekte einer Beziehungsgeschichte," in *Wilhelm II. Archäologie und Politik um 1900*, Thorsten Beigel and Sabine Mangold-Will (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2017), 30.

79 Johannes Flemming to Adolf Harnack; Adolf Harnack to Friedrich Rosen, 8 December 1904, 1901–5, ASWPC; Konrad von Studt and Otto von Mühlberg to Wilhelm II, 20 December 1904,

ed, was to impress the royal Ethiopian couple with German studies of Ethiopian history and religion going back to the collaboration of the Ethiopian priest Abba Gorgoryos and the German Orientalist Hiob Ludolf on a Latin-Ge'ez dictionary at Gotha in the seventeenth century. More recent scholarship by the Bible scholar August Dillmann with his linguistic studies of Ethiopian languages, and Johannes Flemming's very own translation of the *Book of Enoch* from Ge'ez to German, were also expected to impress.⁸⁰ Copies of these books, as an example of masterly German book-print, were to be gifted to Menelik and Taitu to glorify Germany's prestige and induce the court to offer support to Flemming's manuscript acquisition mission. The German minister of culture, Konrad von Studt, supported the endeavour and hoped the Kaiser might chip in with the expenses.⁸¹

As Rosen became slated to lead the expedition in November 1904, the scientific scope of the delegation expanded with the inclusion in the delegation of Rosen's brother Felix, whose botanical career in Breslau (Wrocław) had come to a standstill.⁸² Next to his interests in finding as yet uncategorised plants, Felix also secured funding from the Rudolf Virchow foundation in Berlin and the royal house of Württemberg in Stuttgart, so that he could take phonographic and photographic apparatuses with him to Ethiopia and record the mission in sound and image. Berlin's Völkerkundemuseum asked Felix to purchase ethnographic items for its collection.⁸³ The delegation was completed by the medical doctor Hans Vollbrecht, the three trade-diplomatic staffers Becker, Carl Bosch and Edmund Schüler, and Viktor zu Eulenburg, a military officer attached to the German embassy in London and son of August zu Eulenburg at the court of Wilhelm II. The last appointment in particular had rattled Rosen. Eulenburg had participated in the crackdown of the Boxer Uprising in China in 1900–1,

A 19757, R 14914, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, 1926, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte I*, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 90.

⁸⁰ Johannes Flemming to Adolf Harnack; Adolf Harnack to Friedrich Rosen, 8 December 1904, 1901–5, ASWPC; Anaïs Wion, "Collecting Manuscripts and Scrolls in Ethiopia: The Missions of Johannes Flemming (1905) and Enno Littmann," in *In kaiserlichem Auftrag: Die Deutsche Aksum-Expedition 1906 unter Enno Littmann. Band 2. Altertumskundliche Untersuchungen in Tigray/Äthiopien*, Steffen Wenig (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2012), 353–54.

⁸¹ Konrad von Studt and Otto von Mühlberg to Wilhelm II, 20 December 1904, A 19757, R 14914, PA AA.

⁸² Felix Rosen, *Die Natur in der Kunst. Studien eines Naturforschers zur Geschichte der Malerei* (Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1903); Felix Rosen, *Curriculum Vitae*, 29 October 1892, F 28, AUW; Felix Rosen, *Gesuch zur Beurlaubung für den Rest des laufenden WS*, December 1904, F 84, AUW; Felix Rosen, "Bruder Dornbusch," 406.

⁸³ Konrad von Studt to Felix von Luschan, 12 December 1904, RO Afr. R., PA EMB; Felix Rosen to Felix von Luschan, 18 December 1905, RO Afr. R., PA EMB.

and Rosen feared that the officer would not to conform with a diplomatic mission in an extra-European environment. Attached to the mixed group of men were eight elite soldiers from the Kaiser's bodyguard, the Gardes du Corps, who were tasked with adorning the delegation and practicalities like tent construction and security.⁸⁴

The express justification for Rosen's appointment to head the Sondergesandtschaft (special mission) was that he was an Orient expert and by 1904 a diplomat trusted by the Kaiser. Rosen would in retrospect come to think that Holstein had gotten him removed from Berlin in the build-up of making a stand at Tangier in the spring of 1905 – a move which Rosen opposed.⁸⁵ Rosen's knowledge of people or things Ethiopian were scant. Although the head of the Anglo-Protestant Bishopric in Jerusalem during Rosen's father's time as consul there, Samuel Gobat, had led a mission to Ethiopia before settling in the Holy City, Rosen does not mention any exposure to Ethiopia or Ethiopians in his childhood. Only when Rosen returned to Jerusalem as consul in 1899 did this change, when he met a young German scholar of Semitic languages, who had come to Jerusalem to study Arabic, Amharic and Ge'ez with the Ethiopian Abba Kefla Giorgis. Over dinner at the German consulate Enno Littmann talked with Rosen about his research interests in ancient and modern Ethiopian culture and language. Moreover, Rosen followed the Deir es-Sultan conflict and the Ethiopian construction of the Debre Genet monastery outside of the city walls, and the Ethiopian colony located in short walking distance from the new German consulate building outside the city walls.⁸⁶ However, only when he moved to the

84 Karl von Einem to Friedrich Rosen, 11 December 1904, A 1489, R 14914, PA AA.

85 It is unclear if there was a causal connection of the Morocco affair to Rosen's appointment as head of the mission. Müller-Werth found no proof in the archives of the Auswärtiges Amt substantiating Rosen's suspicions. Holstein uttered unease to Bülow in September 1904 about no longer having a higher standing at the Auswärtiges Amt than Rosen. Bülow noted in his memoirs that the "quarrelsome" Holstein had taken "Rosen, god knows why, en grippe" in the summer of 1905. Müller-Werth, *Ein staatsmännisch denkender Diplomat*, 59; Norman Rich, M.H. Fisher, and Werner Frauendienst, eds., *Die Geheimen Papiere Friedrich von Holsteins. Briefwechsel 10. Januar 1897 bis 8. Mai 1909* (Göttingen: Musters Schmidt, 1963), 275, 331; Bernhard von Bülow, *Denkwürdigkeiten. Von der Marokko-Krise bis zum Abschied*, Franz von Stockhammern (Berlin: Ullstein, 1930), 168; Frederic Whyte, trans., *Letters of Prince von Bülow. A Selection from Prince von Bülow's Official Correspondence as Imperial Chancellor During the Years 1903–1909, Including, in Particular, Many Confidential Letters Exchanged Between Him and the Emperor* (London: Hutchinson & Co, 1930), 125.

86 Barbara Strebel, "Gobat, Samuel," in *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica. A Reference Work on the Horn of Africa*, vol. 2, Siegbert Uhlig (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005), 818–19; Friedrich Rosen to Enno Littmann, 3 January 1900, 1, 28 NL 245 EL, StaBiB; Enno Littmann, Study Book in Arabic from Jerusalem, February 1900, 71 NL 245 EL, StaBiB; Guébré Sellassié and Maur-

Orient desk did Rosen come to deal with Ethiopia professionally, and even then Ethiopia remained on the margins of his ambit. Littmann, then at Princeton, wrote to Rosen in early 1902 to update him on his latest publications on Amharic and that he had learned in a conversation with the journalist and French envoy to Ethiopia Hugues le Roux that the country was by now “almost the only really independent state in Africa, gaining more and more in significance”, and that there was a struggle for influence between the European powers at Menelik’s court, as the country promised rich gold resources and was in a position to cut off the Nile water supply to Egypt.⁸⁷ Apart from these geo-strategic considerations and limited Jerusalem familiarisation, Rosen had little prior exposure to Ethiopia.

Language was the first problem for the German delegation. No one knew Amharic. The ancient Ge’ez read by Flemming was not going to be of much assistance as the librarian self-critically pointed out, so one of Rosen’s first tasks as head of the mission was to recruit an interpreter. As Amharic was not taught at the SOS and virtually unknown in Germany at the time, the general consulate in Cairo arranged for someone to join the mission en route to Ethiopia who was able to write formally in negotiations with Menelik, and did not cost too much. This was to be Wolde Mariam, a native speaker of Amharic, who was fluent in Arabic and could thus interpret for Rosen and Bosch, who also knew a bit of Arabic.⁸⁸ If Rosen was in any way the most knowledgeable German diplomat of rank at disposal, it was only partially his previous exposure to the country that qualified him. The view from the *Auswärtiges Amt* was Orient is Orient, and also Rosen thought about Ethiopia in terms of place, culture and people outside of Europe. Yet, as his first move – finding a reliable interpreter – demonstrates, he was acutely aware of his and his mission’s lack of knowledge about Ethiopia. His brother Felix and Flemming began studying previous travel accounts in European languages and maps by geographical expeditions, but as would become clear in Ethiopia much of the information provided was entirely

ice de Coppet, eds., *Chronique du règne de Ménélik II. Roi des rois d’Éthiopie*, trans. Tèsfa Selassié (Paris: Librairie orientale et américaine, 1932), 514–17; Enno Littmann, “Nachruf. Friedrich Rosen,” *ZDMG* 89 (1935): 394; *Verhandlungen des XIII. internationalen Orientalisten-Kongresses. Hamburg September 1902* (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1904), 271–72.

⁸⁷ Enno Littmann to Friedrich Rosen, 23 March 1902, 1901–5, ASWPC.

⁸⁸ Johannes Flemming to Adolf Harnack; Adolf Harnack to Friedrich Rosen, 8 December 1904, 1901–5, ASWPC; Martin Rücker Freiherr von Jenisch to Friedrich Rosen, 2 December 1904, A 1913, R 14914, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Martin von Jenisch, 22 November 1904, A 18899, R 14914, PA AA; Martin Rücker Freiherr von Jenisch to Friedrich Rosen, 2 December 1904, A 22991, R 14914, PA AA; Hans Vollbrecht, *Im Reiche des Negus Negesti Menelik II. Eine Gesandtschaftsreise nach Abessinien* (Stuttgart: Union Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1906), 25.

fanciful or inaccurate.⁸⁹ The German diplomatic mission became a study excursion to remedy a lack of knowledge in all fields. As Felix Rosen explained to the director of the Berliner Völkerkundemuseum after the expedition, he had “no adventures” to boast about, but could report on Ethiopian “flora, fauna, geography and ethnography”.⁹⁰

The Ethiopian government’s repeated expressions of interest in establishing relations with Germany were motivated by a number of considerations. Barely half the size before Menelik’s accession to power, by 1904 Ethiopian territory expanded onto the borders of French Djibouti, British Sudan, Somaliland and East Africa, and Italian Somalia and Eritrea. Menelik, Taitu, Ilg and Ras Makonen reasoned that bringing in further European powers would balance out the influence of the European neighbours. Although Ethiopia had delineated its borders with Britain (1897 and 1902) and Italy (1896), was at peace and growing in economic productivity, the state was still young and for most of its technological advances dependant on European or Asian expertise or imports. With a reputation for military might, a growing economy, scientific advances and without noticeable territorial ambitions, Germany, it was hoped, would help with economic development and serve as an additional guarantor of Ethiopian independence. Russia, which Ethiopia had tried to interest in its affairs in the past, had been unrewarding, and although Ethiopia moved closer to the Ottoman Empire over its church affairs, diplomatic recognition by “the sick man of Europe” was not nearly as valuable in terms of sovereignty as that of Germany. Whether Menelik and his advisor Ilg had considered including Germany in any other concrete plans or projects before the arrival of the mission in February 1905 is unclear. The conflict between Ilg and the de facto German representative before the arrival of the official mission, Holtz, that the European press reported on shortly before the departure of the Rosen mission indicates that neither Ilg nor Menelik had hoped to gain more than symbolic recognition and German involvement.⁹¹

89 Felix Rosen to Nina Rosen, 26 March 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC; Felix Rosen, *Eine deutsche Gesandtschaft in Abessinien* (Leipzig: Veit & Co, 1907), 23, 49, 133–34; Konrad von Studt and Otto von Mühlberg to Wilhelm II, 20 December 1904, A 19757, R 14914, PA AA.

90 Felix Rosen to Felix von Luschan, 8 January 1906, RO Afr. R., PA EMB.

91 Holtz plotted against Ilg at the Ethiopian court, accusing him of selling out the country to France and being a Germanophobe. According to the story Holtz fed to a number of international papers, Ilg had then been removed from power by Menelik. In November 1904 the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* clarified that Holtz had been the source of “false rumours”, while Ilg had been on leave in Switzerland. Holtz’s stay in Berlin over the summer of 1904 was due to his expulsion from Ethiopia upon Ilg’s return. Otto Eccius to Friedrich Rosen, 20 December 1904, A 20016, R 14914, PA AA; “Ratgeber des Kaisers Menelik,” *Neue Preußische Zeitung* 527 (9 November 1904); Friedrich Rosen, Aufzeichnung über Arnold Holtz, 12 July 1905, A 12285, R 14915,

Notwithstanding first signs of his questionable reliability, Holtz remained in charge of announcing the German mission to Menelik and arranging transportation of people, equipment and presents from the Ethiopian border to Addis Ababa via caravan. On 6 January 1904 the mission landed in Djibouti, where it was received “obligingly” by the French authorities and travelled to the town of Dire Dawa in Ethiopia on the French constructed railway. The railway construction had come to a stand-still after the Fashoda Incident in 1898 led to a rapprochement between France and Britain, and France gave up on linking its possessions in Africa by rail from East to West. Having run out of money after the loss of political backing, the French governor and the railway directorate in Djibouti were keen on interesting the Germans in the project, and Rosen noted in his report back to Berlin that this appeared to be directed from Paris.⁹² At Dire Dawa, it turned out that the caravan with which the mission and its gifts were to be transported to Addis Ababa was inadequately prepared by Holtz. The mechanic he sent from the capital was also unable to disassemble and pack up the Daimler truck that the mission had brought along on behest of Holtz. The mules and donkeys that awaited the mission were not well-fed and their pack saddles were ill-suited to carry the wares of the mission. Friedrich and Felix squarely blamed Holtz for the shortcomings.⁹³ In Djibouti, Rosen had hired some one hundred and ninety Somalis of the Habr Aual tribe to lead the animals, but now more mules had to be bought, delaying the departure by several days and resulting in splitting the travelling party into three.⁹⁴

Onward travel was slow, with Rosen complaining in a letter to Nina that unlike the caravans he was used to in Iran and the Fertile Crescent, the animals could only walk some four hours at a stretch before having to rest for several hours. Nevertheless, many a mule was left along the wayside. After Eulenburg had shot dead the first mule that had broken down, the Somali guides demurred, as this was against their caravaners’ code and brought bad luck. The Germans were informed that the animals might recover and it was not up to their keepers

PA AA; Arnold Holtz to Friedrich Rosen, 11 December 1904, A 19232, R 14914, PA AA; Arnold Holtz to Friedrich Rosen, 11 December 1904, A 19232, R 14914, PA AA; Otto Eccius to Friedrich Rosen, 20 December 1904, A 20016, R 14914, PA AA.

⁹² Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, January 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen to AA, 6 January 1905, A 284, R 14914, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to AA, 20 February 1905, A 4376, R 14914, PA AA; Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 5; Carl Bosch, *Karawanen-Reisen. Erlebnisse eines deutschen Kaufmanns in Ägypten, Mesopotamien, Persien und Abessinien* (Berlin: August Scherl, 1928), 143; Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 128.

⁹³ Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 22 January 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC; Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 23.

⁹⁴ Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 9, 101; Bosch, *Karawanen-Reisen*, 151.

to decide their fate. Although he thought that most would fall prey to hyenas, Felix recognised that in fact some might get up again and then be claimed by locals. Considering that Rosen was by and large the only person in the mission who could communicate with the Somali packers and with locals in mostly Somali-inhabited Eastern Ethiopia in Arabic, there were bound to be further issues of understanding. When after an evening of carousing, a mutiny broke out among the packers against the hasty speed of the caravan and inadequate pay, the situation became dicey, and Felix was afraid of being lynched. Friedrich had the ringleaders seized and shackled by the escorts that had remained loyal to the Germans under the lead of the interpreter Wolde Mariam. To prevent the situation from escalating further, Rosen did not involve the Gardes du Corps. He redistributed the right to carry rifles, rewarding those who had stayed away from the strike, thus subduing the protesters.⁹⁵ There were other conflicts along the way, and Felix thought that the composition of the caravan of “Christians, Muslims and heathens, Europeans, Egyptians, Abyssinians, Somali, and Galla” was enough “fuel for conflict”, but praised his brother for not tolerating violence:

In diesem wichtigen Punkte kamen meinem Bruder die Erfahrungen langjährigen Aufenthaltes in orientalischen Ländern zugute. Im Gegensatz zu manchem Afrikareisenden hatte er jede körperliche Züchtigung ein für allemal untersagt... die Disziplin [wurde] durch eine allmählich von uns eingeführte gründliche Marsch- und Lagerorganisation aufrecht erhalten und durch das gute Beispiel, welches den Einheimischen die Arbeitsamkeit und Manneszucht unsrer deutschen Soldaten gab... die Behandlung, welche wir den Eingebornen angedeihen ließen, war richtig und der Nachahmung wert, denn sie ermöglichte uns im fremden Land, wo wir oft gezwungen waren das Gastrecht in Anspruch zu nehmen, auf einem so langen und mühseligen Marsch auch die geringsten der Landesbewohner immer als Freunde zu behandeln⁹⁶

Written a year after the journey, description should be read as commentary of German colonialism and the massacres committed by Germans in East Africa during the Maji Maji Uprising (1905–1907) and in South West Africa against the Herero and Namaqua (1904–1907). It was also a depiction of the self-under-

⁹⁵ Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 76–91.

⁹⁶ “In this important point my brother benefitted from his long years of residence in Oriental countries. In contrast to many a Africa traveller he had interdicted bodily castigation once for all... Discipline was maintained by a gradually introduced, thorough marching and camping organisation, and by the good example that the industriousness and the discipline of our German soldiers set for the indigenous... the treatment, which we afforded the natives, was right and worthy of imitation, because it enabled us in a foreign land, where we were often forced to avail ourselves of the right to hospitality, on such a long and arduous march to treat also the lowest of the country’s inhabitants as friends.” Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 164.

standing of the mission. The Germans perceived themselves to be superior and should lead by example. Friendship or friendly relations were possible and desirable. Although there was no level playing field, the Germans became quite reliant on their Ethiopian and Somali escorts. Not only was Wolde Mariam – “quite a gentleman” Friedrich thought – of crucial significance for the mission to communicate with locals along the way, but in a number of letters to Nina, Friedrich painted a clear picture of how lost the German members of his mission were without their Somali and Ethiopian escorts:⁹⁷

I am very much disturbed, especially as I know Arabic. Flemming knows neither Arabic nor modern Abyssinian enough to make use of. Bosch speaks Kitchen-Arabic and makes himself useful haranguing the cooks, but most of the translating fall to my lot, in fact I am “dragoman et ambassadeur”... We have each of us a Somali boy as special servant and an Abyssinian for each riding mule... They are all Moslims and there is no love lost between them and the Abyssinians. It is however better not to depend entirely on the latter, as they are lazy and unruly. The Somalis on the other hand are excellent and all speak Arabic and French. Their French is very comic: “M’sieur Moanstere voila. Moi aller au lager bour manger, voila. Moi acheter barabluie bour toi et bour Felix, voila. Donne moi argent voila.” This is a specimen of their French. Still it is better than the French of some of our gentlemen. Oberstabsarzt Vollbrecht does not know French any more, but quietly speaks “Plattdeutsch” to them. They are quick enough to understand it. Becker on the other hand tries to improve his French by speaking to his Somali! He has studied modern languages at the University! I always speak Arabic to them, which they know much better, of course, though by no means perfectly. They are a cheerful and sympathetic lot and quite poetic in their ideas.⁹⁸

Rosen’s first recorded meeting of Somalis had been when visiting the African ethnological exhibition at the Crystal Palace in 1895 with Nina’s sister Marie:

Fritz went up and said a few words to these poor exiled fellows and the delight depicted on their faces at hearing their own language spoken was quite wonderfully touching. They crowded round Fritz and at one moment I thought they would have embraced him. His few words had evidently brought back their far-away sunny country to them, and given them a few moments of joy in the midst of their (to them) strange surroundings.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, January 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 20 February 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC.

⁹⁸ “Mister minister, voila. I go to the camp to eat, voila. I buy umbrella for you and for Felix, voila. Give me money, voila.” Plattdeutsch is lower German. Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 22 January 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC.

⁹⁹ Dickens, *Mumsey’s Recollections*, 50; Carl Hagenbeck, *East African Village and Great Display by Natives of Somaliland* (Sydenham: Crystal Palace Company, 1895).

As spine-crawling as that first encounter was, Rosen took a liking to the Somalis facilitating his diplomatic mission in 1905. His servant Mahmud Abdi taught him some of his poems and Rosen took every chance to hear, write down and record songs in Somali, Amharic and Tigre. The better part of his free time he passed compiling samples of song and music. As Teffera noted, most of the forty-six songs recorded on wax-cylinder along the way of the mission were of low quality, selected randomly, without geographical or temporal specification.¹⁰⁰ But the musical practice appears to have led to a fair bit of social bonding beyond cultural lines. When the Somali warrior Sheual Abdi, a widely respected and feared chief of the Habr Aual tribe in the service of Ras Makonnen, visited the mission's camp, he was asked to sing one of his songs into the phonograph. Saying he would only do so if a German went first, Bosch sang into the machine *Strömt Herbei Ihr Völkerscharen* (come forth ye multitudes), a song exalting the Rhine River and its wine. Satisfied with Bosch having "roared like a lion", Sheual gave a number of renditions of songs glorifying his deeds in battle, closing with an improvisation that saluted Rosen as envoy of the courageous German tribe and its all-seeing Kaiser.¹⁰¹

The encounters and meetings with the governor of Harar, Ras Makonnen Wolde Mikael, and his son Tafari Makonnen Wolde Mikael (the later Haile Selassie) provided further opportunities for the acculturation of the German mission. Ras Makonnen was known as being particularly open to European cultural influences. A friend of the French poet Arthur Rimbaud, he had attended the coronation of King Edward VII in London in 1902 and was Menelik's right-hand man and prized general at Adua. The German mission found that despite his education, elegance and distinction of character, the ceremonials of state encounter were conducted according to Ethiopian ways. The welcoming parades were not organised according to German expectations of neat categorical and geometrical separations, but met head on and then intertwined to create a common, mixed

100 Timkehet Teffera, "Historische Tonaufnahmen aus Abessinien: Walzensammlung Rosen 1905," Essay, 2005, RO Afr. R., PA EMB; Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 22 January 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC.

101 Sheual Abdi had fought alongside the Somali Sufi leader Mohammed Abdullah Hassan (the Mad Mullah to many Europeans) against the Italians, British and Ethiopians, before joining the side of Ras Makonen. The other songs Abdi sang for Rosen and the surrounding Somalis were recounting the story of how he turned away from Hassan. Unfortunately, Bosch roaring like a lion was razed of the wax cylinder before the hand over to the Völkerkundemuseum. Vollbrecht, *Im Reiche des Negus*, 108; Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 109–20; Felix Rosen, *Verzeichnis der in Abessinien (Frühjahr 1905) aufgenommenen Phonogramme*, Spring 1905, 108–155, RO Afr. R., PA EMB; Bosch, *Karawanen-Reisen*, 147.

procession.¹⁰² Rosen was awarded with expensive gifts, an elegant mule, an honour shield with lances, and a monkey tale as a fly-whisk against the dust and insects. Conversation was polite, and after hours of pleasantries that were utterly boring to the larger part of the German mission, Rosen asked Ras Makonnen for additional pack animals, a wish that was promptly granted with a number of camels to relieve the mules from the heavier freight. Still at near quarters for Kaiser's birthday a joint celebration was held, with a riding competition, goats slaughtered according to Muslim and Christian rites, followed by what appears to have been quite a feast. When the mission continued Rosen had the shield and lances carried behind him to signify his status in accordance with Ethiopian custom – like an “Oberritter” (~baronet), he wrote his sons Oscar and Georg back home.¹⁰³

Considering the lack of travel experience of most in the German mission, the encounters with Ethiopian officials on the way had “provided the chance, for us to become familiar with the sight of an Abyssinian dignitary and Abyssinian soldiers”, Friedrich wrote the *Auswärtiges Amt*.¹⁰⁴ Observing his brother Felix, Friedrich wrote to Nina that “[h]e would profit much more by the journey if he had travelled more before. He would be able to compare what he sees here to other countries.” His own previous cognitive framings had Ras Makonnen appear like a “refined Persian” to Rosen.¹⁰⁵ One should not conclude that this was an entirely harmonious affair of esteem and without prejudice. Rosen thought the eating habits of the Somalis and Ethiopians “quite barbarous”, as he wrote to Nina in one of his first letters. Only later did he take a liking to seeing with what elegance raw ox meat was eaten. The same hesitation and sense of strangeness was shared by the rest of the German delegation. “All was unfamiliar and odd for us”, Bosch noted. But by the time the Germans arrived in Addis Ababa the

102 Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 104–9; Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 15 February 1905, *Reisebericht I*, A 5515, R 14915, PA AA; Ben-Dror, “Rimbaud in Harär”; Berge, *Verschwundene Länder*, 55–56.

103 Friedrich Rosen to Oscar and Georg Rosen, 22 January 1905, *Briefe aus Abessinien*, ASWPC; Martin Rücker Freiherr von Jenisch to Bernhard von Bülow, 28 December 1904, A 8995, R 14892, PA AA; Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 124–27; Bosch, *Karawanen-Reisen*, 149; Fliegenwedel, 13, *Sammlung Rosen I Afrika*. Abessinien, LLM; Theilhaber, “Bestände Rosen Detmold”.

104 Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 15 February 1905, *Reisebericht I*, A 5515, R 14915, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 22 January 1905, *Briefe aus Abessinien*, ASWPC.

105 Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 22 January 1905, *Briefe aus Abessinien*, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 26 January 1905, *Briefe aus Abessinien*, ASWPC.

soldiers of the Gardes du Corps showed, to the pleasure of Menelik, no aversion to eating with their hands.¹⁰⁶

The splitting of the caravan had resulted in the camels' taking a different route and arriving nearly a week later than the mission itself. This posed a problem. The camels carried the uniforms of the gardes du corps and the gifts for Menelik, and thus the mission had no choice but to camp outside the city and wait for their equipment before it could enter the city. Anything else would have been taken as an offence by Menelik, and Rosen wanted to make an impression with his uniformed soldiers. In the meantime, Rosen conducted his first meetings with Ilg, arranging the entry into the city and finding out more about the political scenery. Holtz also came to meet Rosen.¹⁰⁷ Seeing himself, as he wrote later that year, obliged to work on Holtz's behalf as his "German compatriot", Rosen attempted to reconcile Holtz and Ilg. Despite Ilg's severe reservations, who still felt insulted by the campaign against his person, and Holtz's brazen demand to be appointed German consul if he was to apologise to Ilg, Rosen succeeded initially in making peace between the German he was bound to support and the Swiss, on whose trust the success of his mission depended.¹⁰⁸ A few days later Rosen wrote to Nina that "Holtz is quite a dreadful fellow, mad, ambitious, hefty and deceitful". After Holtz refused to participate in the welcoming procession, as he had not been made consul, Rosen wrote to Mühlberg:

Die einzigen Schwierigkeiten, die ich bisher gefunden habe, hat mir unser Landsmann Holtz bereitet. Ich habe mit der größten Mühe den hier hoch angesehenen Staatsrat Ilg dazu gebracht sich mit Herrn Holtz auszusöhnen. Wenn Holtz auch nur für einen Dreier gesunden Menschenverstand besitzt, wird er diese Situation für sich und seine Auftraggeber ausnützen. Aber sein Größendünkel und seine Empfindlichkeit sind vielleicht schon zu weit vorgeschritten, und ich fürchte er wird bald an den Punkte anlangen, wo die Kunst der Diplomatie aufhört, um der des Psychiaters Platz zu machen.¹⁰⁹

106 Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 14/15 January 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 20 February 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC; Bosch, *Karawanen-Reisen*, 176.

107 Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 166.

108 Friedrich Rosen to Reinhold Klehmet, 20 July 1905, A 15271, R 14915, PA AA.

109 "The only difficulties I have so far encountered were caused by our compatriot Holtz. With much effort I have convinced the here highly regarded state secretary Ilg to reconcile with Holtz. If Holtz owns only a healthy mind worth threepence, he will take advantage of this situation for himself and his employers. But his arrogance and his sensitivity are perhaps already too advanced, and I am afraid that he will soon have reached the point, where the art of diplomacy ends to make space for that of the psychiatrist." Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 20 February 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen to Otto von Mühlberg, 20 February 1905, A 4382, R 14914, PA AA.

For the rest of the mission this simmering issue was of little consequence, as Ilg and Rosen got along well and Holtz left Addis Ababa before the start of negotiations – to bring the Daimler truck stuck in Dire Dawa to the capital.¹¹⁰

The missing uniforms finally arrived and the German Sondergesandtschaft readied to enter Addis Ababa on 12 February. Dressed in gala uniform and supplied in advance with horses by the Ethiopian court, the Gardes du Corps under the direction of Eulenburg – dressed as a king's hussar – led the German procession into the capital.¹¹¹ The “long blond lads”, as Felix called them, were followed by the honorific mule Rosen had received from Ras Makonen, and another one sent over by Menelik just before the ceremony. Both mules were adorned in silver and embroidered bridles. Behind them rode Rosen as chief of the mission in infantry uniform, next to Ilg as the Ethiopian representative, who wore tailcoat and the diplomat's tricorne. Rosen's honour shield and lances were carried behind. Then came the other members of the German delegation in uniform or tailcoats, and finally the Somali and Ethiopian servants all dressed in khaki and with black-white-red (the German colours) aiguillettes forming the rear-guard.¹¹² Riding towards the German procession on an open field were two rows of Abyssinian soldiers in “rich garb”, followed by infantry and more cavalry. At the head of the welcoming party rode general Ras Tassama, wearing a lion's mane. After dismounting, “welcome and polite phrases were exchanged following Oriental style, and introductions were done according to European custom.” Continuing into the city, Ras Tassama rode on the side of Rosen, with the suites of the two men mixing. Felix was in awe: “Immer neue Massen schlossen sich an, die lebhafteste Bewegung schien die Zahl zu verdoppeln. Bald wälzte sich eine ungeheure Menschenmenge rechts und links der Straße vorwärts, laufend, springend, kletternd... Und welch ein Farbenspiel!” Some 12,000 men moved towards the city accompanied by horns being tooted. Vollbrecht and Bosch were equally thrilled, and Friedrich wrote Nina that “it was altogether like a dream”.¹¹³

110 Friedrich Rosen to Otto von Mühlberg, 11 July 1905, A 12285, R 14915, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Reinhold Klehmet, 20 July 1905, A 15271, R 14915, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, *Aufzeichnung über Arnold Holtz*, 12 July 1905, A 12285, R 14915, PA AA.

111 Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 169–74; “Menelek Receives Kaiser's Envoy,” *New York Times*, 14 February 1905.

112 Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 174; Bezirks-Kommando I. Breslau to AA, 7 December 1904, 2567 II, R 14914, PA AA; Prunkschilder, 31–33, Sammlung Rosen I Afrika. Abessinien, LLM; Pferdegeschirr und Sattel, 1–11, Sammlung Rosen I Afrika. Abessinien, LLM.

113 “Ever new masses linked together, the lively movement seemed to double the numbers. Soon a tremendous multitude of people rolled left and right of the road forward, running, jumping, climbing... and what a play of colours!” Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 176–77;

After being dusted down, the delegation entered the dimly lit audience hall, blinded by the bright light outside. Slowly regaining sight at the end of the hall, a throne of cushions came into focus, with emperor Menelik on top wearing “a crown made entirely of diamonds”.¹¹⁴ Flanked by his court members, Menelik received the German delegation with Rosen delivering his greetings, while handing over a letter from Wilhelm in a rich casing: “Wir kommen, um dem geeinten und mächtigen Äthiopischen Reich die Freundschaft des großen deutschen Volkes anzutragen, das mit Abessinien in friedlichen Verkehr zu treten wünscht.”¹¹⁵ Polite conversation ensued about the two countries, and their flowering and grace under their imperial leaders. Menelik took a keen interest in the Gardes du Corps standing at attention in “iron motionlessness”. After a few more pleasantries the German delegation left the Negus Negesti deeply impressed and elevated by Menelik’s friendliness and good humour. As Rosen would also find during later encounters, Menelik was “really very nice” and would often “step out of the reserve that has become second nature of most Oriental rulers.”¹¹⁶ Leaving the hall through rows of musicians playing Ethiopian tunes and eleven canons fired, the Germans were escorted by a number of court nobles and military figures to the spacious villas that Ras Makonnen and Ras Mikael had vacated for the duration of the German guests’ stay. Upon arrival at their abodes the Ethiopians started serving Tetj, a honey wine, and the Germans opened their reserves of Danziger Goldwasser, a gold flaked herbal liqueur.¹¹⁷

The diplomatic mission was off to a good start. During the following days the Germans called on the envoys of the European diplomatic corps, visited Ras Tassama and other generals and met with the head of the Ethiopian Church, the Abuna. These social events, mostly along European style fourteen course meals, were important to gain an understanding of the political situation in

Vollbrecht, *Im Reiche des Negus*, 65; Bosch, *Karawanen-Reisen*, 154; Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 20 February 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC.

114 Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 178; Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 20 February 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen to Oscar and Georg Rosen, 15 February 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC.

115 “We are coming, to offer to the unified and mighty Ethiopian empire the friendship of the great German people, which wishes to enter into peaceful intercourse with Abyssinia.” Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 1 March 1905, A 5516, R 14915, PA AA; Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 179.

116 Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 180–81; Friedrich Rosen to Otto von Mühlberg, 20 February 1905, A 4382, R 14914, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 20 February 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC.

117 Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 181; Friedrich Rosen to Oscar and Georg Rosen, 15 February 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC.

the capital; who was in a position of influence, what were the latest plans and ambitions of those in power.¹¹⁸ As had already been in the air with the French government in Djibouti, one topic of local European politicking was the halted railway construction from the Red Sea to Addis Ababa due to a lack of finances, and attempts to open up the French railway concession to international investment.¹¹⁹ The British envoy John Harrington had together with the Egyptian government devised the creation of a national bank of Ethiopia, which should also contribute to the continuation of the railway construction.

Another goal was to create a functioning Ethiopian mint to replace the Austrian Maria Theresa Thaler, rifle bullets and salt as currency – something the government of Menelik also designed to further unify his empire and bolster his sovereignty. Harrington talked to Rosen openly about these plans, probably either desiring a German financial involvement or merely the expression of German interest as a lever for negotiations with the Italian and French representatives, who were also supposed to participate in the management and funding of the bank.¹²⁰ The news of the establishment of the bank, with a starting capital of 480,000 pounds to be owned with 50 % of shares by the National Bank of Egypt and another 25 % by French and Italian consortiums, had that spring reached Berlin through its consulate in Cairo. Germany had not been involved in the previous planning of the bank.¹²¹ Rosen saw a chance to involve Germany in Ethiopia with the agreement of European partners and thus potentially send a collaborative signal to European politics from the periphery. Delivering concrete results to German finance was also a promising prospect. Lastly, Germany would contribute to Ethiopia's economic development in what looked like a constructive, largely Ethiopian driven initiative. It conformed to the self-understanding of Rosen and lent the mission a strategic purpose. Rather than becoming overly dependent on one of the three neighbouring powers, ensuring stable Ethiopian finances was the best guarantee for the continued independence of Ethiopia.

The meetings with the Ethiopian nobles Ras Tassama, the governor of Kaffa Ras Wolde Giorgis, the general and intimus of Taitu Dejazmatch Abbata, and another son of Ras Makonnen appear to have been of mostly social or informational nature. This may have had to do with hierarchical structure of the Ethiopian

118 Menu Russian Legation, 3/16 February 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC; Menu British Legation, 18 February 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC; Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 190–92.

119 Friedrich Rosen to AA, 20 February 1905, A 4376, R 14914, PA AA.

120 Friedrich Rosen to Otto von Mühlberg, 20 February 1905, A 4382, R 14914, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 27 February 1905, ASWPC.

121 Otto von Mühlberg to Friedrich Rosen, 8 February 1905, A 2147, R 14892, PA AA.

government or Rosen simply not wanting to engage with any lower level court members out of a lack of knowledge about them, fear of alienating others or appearing insolent to Menelik. Nevertheless, these meetings were significant, particularly for future business deals and understanding the economic landscape.¹²² The meeting with Abuna Mattheos X was also mostly social, although the elderly Coptic Bishop expressed wariness about his posting away from Egypt. Aware of the Jerusalem question in the years before and the conflict between the Egyptian Copts and the Ethiopian orthodox, whose highest priests were Copts, and the recurring threat of a schism uttered by the Ethiopians, Rosen was cautious in his interactions with the Abuna, as he wanted to collaborate with Menelik and Taitu. If Felix's derision of the Abuna's corruption is any indication, the meeting did not come to any tangible results.¹²³

Most important were the meetings with Ilg. With his unrivalled position at Menelik's court, understanding of the power structures in Addis Ababa and lay of the land generally, Ilg was sympathetic to the German mission and its goals. In his reports to the Auswärtiges Amt Rosen was clear that Ilg facilitated and ensured the functioning of the mission and helped the German to understand the workings of the country and prepare for political negotiations. The trusted Ethiopian advisor Ilg, who was since Adua beyond any suspicion of secretly working for foreign interests, provided access to the German delegation and levelled sources of cultural misunderstanding. After decades in Ethiopia and fluent in Amharic, Ilg was an easy conversation partner for the Germans and Felix later wrote that they felt entirely at home in the German speaker's house. Ilg had been peeved by the allegation of being Germanophobic, an accusation that the entire German delegation would in the aftermath of the mission try to dispel.¹²⁴ Yet, while this cultural closeness, ease of communication and sympathy was useful, Ilg still acted in Ethiopian state interests. The antagonistic and manipulative Holtz had made collaboration difficult. The Rosen mission's

122 Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 196–202; Bosch, *Karawanen-Reisen*, 159.

123 Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 18 March 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC; Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 183.

124 Friedrich Rosen to Otto von Mühlberg, 20 February 1905, A 4382, R 14914, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 12 March 1905, A 5517, R 14915, PA AA; Felix Rosen, "Kaiser Menelik und Seine Leute," *Berliner Tageblatt*, 18 May 1905; Friedrich Rosen to Reinhold Klehmet, 20 July 1905, A 15271, R 14915, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to AA, 20 February 1905, A 4376, R 14914, PA AA; Clapham, "Mənilək II," 923; Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 187–90; Conrad Keller, "Alfred Ilg," *Jahresberichte der Geographisch-Ethnographischen Gesellschaft in Zürich* 16 (1916): XII; Conrad Keller, *Alfred Ilg. Sein Leben und sein Wirken als schweizerischer Kulturbote in Abessinien* (Frauenfeld: Huber, 1918), 240.

interests in internationalised trade agreements, scientific exploration and Germany as a factor for balancing out the other European powers was an opportunity for Ethiopia that Ilg could connect neatly with his own interests.

Another week later, the remainder of the caravan arrived with the gifts, and a formal audience with Menelik was held on 19 February. The German delegation rode to the audience hall of Menelik in great gala costumes. As the Gardes du Corps stood to attention, Menelik gave the Germans a “lively welcome”. After Rosen decorated Menelik with the Großkreuz des Roten Adlerorden, leaving a deep impression with all Ethiopians and Germans present, a golden-framed life-sized picture of Kaiser Wilhelm in uniform was unveiled at a sign of Rosen. Felix noted: “Non-compliant with etiquette [Menelik] left his throne and rushed to the picture, bursting out “It is as if I could talk with him.””¹²⁵ As Menelik sat down again every member of the German delegation handed the emperor a gift. While the photographs of Berlin’s and Potsdam’s castles found as much grace in the eyes of Menelik as the silver cutlery, silk and other gifts, Flemming had the pleasure to hand over a stack of books written in Amharic and Ge’ez that had been printed in Germany over the last few hundred years. On top sat Flemming’s own publication.

Diese Gabe bereitete dem Negus besondere Freude, und er durchblätterte sofort Buch für Buch, lobte die Klarheit und Gleichmäßigkeit der Typen und schlug hin und wieder eine Lieblingsstelle nach. Sichtlich machte es großen Eindruck auf ihn, zu sehen, daß die deutsche Wissenschaft sich längst mit der Sprache und Literatur seines Landes beschäftigt hatte, bevor noch an offizielle Beziehungen zwischen beiden Staaten gedacht worden war. Der Negus gab auch sogleich Befehl unsrem Reisegenossen seine Studien über amharische Manuskripte in jeder Weise zu erleichtern und ihm vor allen Dingen die kaiserliche Bibliothek im Gebi und die Büchersammlungen in den Kirchen der Stadt und Antottos zugänglich zu machen.¹²⁶

125 Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 1 March 1905, A 5516, R 14915, PA AA; Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 253.

126 “This gift brought the Negus special joy, and he immediately leafed through one book after the other, praised the clarity and the evenness of the types and looked up some of his favourite passages. Visibly, it made a big impression on him to see that German scholarship had for long engaged with the language and literature of his country, long before official relations between both states were even thought about. Straightaway, the Negus gave order to facilitate the studies of Amharic manuscripts of our travel companion in every way and to grant him access to the imperial library in the Gebi and the book collections in the churches of the city and in Entoto.” Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 254–55.

The German gesture gained in meaning when considering that the British had plundered 1,000 ancient manuscripts in Ethiopia during a punitive expedition led by Robert Napier in 1867.¹²⁷

As the reception came to a close, Rosen inquired to see Empress Taitu, as the German Kaiserin had sent gifts for her. Likely this was pre-arranged by Ilg. A direct request for an audience would have been against etiquette, but despite this being an “unusual request” Menelik had no objections. Finding Taitu in a different hall, the delegation was asked to sit next to the Empress. Photographs of Kaiserin Auguste Viktoria and the German court’s princes and princesses were handed over, together with silks and silverware picked out by Nina.¹²⁸ A German altar piece chosen by the German royal couple found particular favour with Taitu. It was above all that it had been the Kaiser and Kaiserin personally, who had made the choice, that pleased the Ethiopian rulers. Signalling that the German court and government knew that Taitu and Menelik took an interest in church matters, and sending a gift that nodded to the common Christianity of the two royal houses, created a symbolic common ground and projected goodwill. As Bosch observed, the conversation with Taitu broached church affairs, a matter that Rosen “knew very well. He was thus in a position to conduct with the Empress a for her very interesting conversation about Jerusalem, churches and other topics – of course not failing to leave an impression”.¹²⁹

The gifting was followed by feasting. Organised weekly or biweekly, on the day of Gebi the Negus Negesti received some 8,000 people in his hall. Intended to popularise the ruler, all visitors joined in a large meal.¹³⁰ The Germans were seated with the Negus on a podium, but sat separately along a European table. In a show of favour, the Gardes du Corps were asked to sit with the Ethiopian nobles. Next to Ethiopian food, strong Ethiopian wine, also Bordeaux and champagne were served and after the third course a curtain surrounding the podium was lifted and several thousand people streamed into the hall to eat. While Felix was not entirely at ease, feeling reminded of a “feeding in a zoological garden” and finding the food too spicy, Friedrich was mostly taken by the “kindness and greatness of Kaiser Menelik” and wrote to Nina that “[i]t was a wonderful sight as [the Ethiopians] sliced off their raw meat and ate it cutting it off in front of their lips with a knife. The Negus is quite in love with the Gardes du

¹²⁷ Ferguson, *Empire*, 176–79.

¹²⁸ Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 20 February 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC; Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 255.

¹²⁹ Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 1 March 1905, A 5516, R 14915, PA AA; Bosch, *Karawanen-Reisen*, 136.

¹³⁰ Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 257.

Corps whom he let eat with him on the reserved platform. We spent many hours in that hall and were half dead when we came home.”¹³¹

A few days later Menelik carried out his return visit to the German camp. Out of politeness to the Germans he arrived on horseback rather than on the traditional mule. Rosen found, “[i]t was a grand sight. He rode a splendid big war-horse all covered with gold trappings and looked most imposing with a spear in his hand. His suite was equally picturesque.” Honey cake, marzipan and Danziger Goldwasser were served. Menelik liked the marzipan best.¹³² Under the direction of Eulenburg the Gardes du Corps performed a lancing joust for the entertainment of Menelik, the blond lads apparently putting up a good show: “The handsome tall people in their stately uniform impressed everywhere in Ethiopia, where everyone is a soldier, and exemplified moreover the discipline of which our fatherland can be proud.” The Italian chargé d’affaires Giuseppe di Felizzano Colli confirmed to Rosen that Menelik felt “très flatté” by Wilhelm having sent his elite unit with the mission to his court.¹³³ Menelik returned the favours by presenting medals, national costumes in gold, weapons, elephant tusks and church items for the German imperial couple. Rosen received another honour shield with lances and the medal of the Ethiopian Star. On the following day Menelik sent a mule and a horse each for Rosen and Eulenburg. Ever interested in riding animals, Rosen was very pleased with what he had received.¹³⁴

Only after the exchanges of gifts had passed amicably, with both sides having recognised each other’s honour and expressed their respect, did the negotiations between Rosen and Menelik begin formally.¹³⁵ The first topic of discussion was the treaty establishing diplomatic and trade relations. This was a relatively simple affair. Both countries had already beforehand made it known that a treaty should be agreed upon. The form of the treaty then was a near one-to-one copy of the treaty Ethiopia had signed with the US in 1903, including elements from the British treaty from 1897. The contract was largely reciprocal. Freedom and security of movement, residence, trade, labour and property were guaranteed to the citizens of both countries, but it was singled out that German companies should have access to all forms of infrastructure in Ethiopia, a provision that

131 Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 1 March 1905, A 5516, R 14915, PA AA.

132 Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 27 February 1905, ASWPC.

133 Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 12 March 1905, A 5517, R 14915, PA AA.

134 Friedrich Rosen to Oscar and Georg Rosen, 15 February 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC.

135 Steven Kaplan and Dirk Bustorf, “Gifts,” in *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica. A Reference Work on the Horn of Africa*, vol. 2, Siegbert Uhlig (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005), 791–92.



Fig. 4.2. Menelik II (seated) and Friedrich Rosen inspecting the Gardes du Corps in Addis Ababa, March 1905.

was not included for Ethiopians in Germany.¹³⁶ These elements were by and large the same as in the US treaty, but Rosen had pressed for the sharpening of the language guaranteeing the security of citizens. An addition in the German treaty was a clause guaranteeing Germany “most favourite nation” status, that is, any trade facilitation or customs reduction awarded to any other country should also be applicable to Germany. Wilhelm later expressed in a letter to Menelik his appreciation of Germany being granted this status.¹³⁷

Excluded was a clause of the US and British treaties that stipulated that jurisdiction was held by the country of residence. As Rosen reported to Berlin, this was the only sticky point in the negotiations.¹³⁸ Menelik and Ilg were surely aware of how the jurisdiction system of the capitulations was used by European powers to undermine the sovereignty and independence of the Ottoman Empire, Iran and other countries, by essentially granting to European citizens an extra-

¹³⁶ Tafla, *Ethiopia and Germany*, 106.

¹³⁷ Wilhelm II to Menelik II, 3 July 1905, A 10721, R 14915, PA AA; Bernhard von Bülow, “Deutsch-Äthiopischer Freundschafts- und Handelsvertrag,” Introduction to Treaty, 1906, R 14894, PA AA.

¹³⁸ Friedrich Rosen to AA, 27 February 1905, A 3220, R 14914, PA AA.

judicial status in their dealings there. Clarifying jurisdiction as in the US-Ethiopian treaty would have meant that German citizens could be judged by Ethiopian courts. Although Felix's report dispelled some of the myths prevalent in previous European travel reports over the abject brutality of the Ethiopian legal system, Rosen preferred not to have Ethiopian jurisdiction over German citizens mentioned in the treaty. The complete absence of the question of jurisdiction was an expression of the difficulty of finding an acceptable formula. The issue was left open. Future cases would be dealt with on the diplomatic level. Given the still relatively low numbers of Germans in Ethiopia and vice versa, this was a sensible compromise for the time being.

As in the US treaty, Ethiopia and Germany agreed to grant each other the right to send resident diplomats, something important for the signalling of mutual recognition and for Germany to support its business interests in Ethiopia.¹³⁹ In the middle of the meetings Rosen wired to Berlin:

“Kaiser Menelik ist politisch einsichtig genug, um zu begreifen, daß seine Selbstständigkeit um so gesicherter wird je mehr Mächte in Äthiopien interessiert sind und daß die größte Gefahr für ihn darin besteht, daß durch Großbauten und Konzessionen politisch Interessensphären in seinem Reiche geschaffen werden.”

Rosen told Menelik that Germany wanted to be included in all future international enterprises to prevent Ethiopia from being carved up by the neighbouring powers. According to Rosen's report, Menelik answered that it would be possible for Germany to participate in the new Ethiopian national bank and that he was interested in involving Germany in the completion of the railway from Djibouti to Addis Ababa. While this was music in Rosen's ears, he answered that Germany needed to act in “complete restraint” as long as any other European power held a legal concession. However, should Menelik internationalise the railway, Germany would gladly participate with financial provisions.¹⁴⁰ Rosen suggested that an international consortium could be established, or Menelik could take back the concession and lead construction himself with the help of international finances and hire foreign industrial companies. Menelik signalled

139 Bernhard von Bülow, “Deutsch-Äthiopischer Freundschafts- und Handelsvertrag,” Introduction to Treaty, 1906, R 14894, PA AA; Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 244–45; Bosch, *Karawanen-Reisen*, 159.

140 “Emperor Menelik is insightful enough to realise that his independence is safer the more powers are interested in Ethiopia, and that the greatest danger is for him that through large building enterprises and concessions political spheres of interest are created in his empire.” Friedrich Rosen to AA, 10 March 1905, A 4257, R 14914, PA AA.

agreement to the suggestion, and as Rosen wrote back to Berlin, Ilg began talking with the French representative Léonce Lagarde about the matter before the departure of the German mission. Rosen also spoke with Lagarde, who apparently received his suggestion of German financial support for the dying railway project with “animated satisfaction”. On 12 April, Ilg wrote Rosen that Menelik had told the powers represented in Addis Ababa that he intended to internationalise the railway.¹⁴¹ An issue on which Lagarde was more hesitant, but found Harrington’s support, was the establishment of the Ethiopian state bank. In conversations with Harrington and Colli, Rosen received agreement that a German banking consortium could be integrated into an international funding group of the bank. Menelik suggested German involvement on the administrative board of the bank.¹⁴²

In this back and forth, two notions were central. Menelik thought of the Germans as a good partner in railway construction, as they had a track-record with the Ottomans: build a railway, but without territorial ambitions. Rosen thought of Menelik as someone who knew how to use his power and was able to deliver, also against Europeans and their legal contracts, as he had demonstrated with his abrogation of the Treaty of Wuchale. Ilg, who was present at all negotiations, helped along. Germany was late to the Ethiopian show, but mutual interests were clear on both sides. As Felix reported, his brother “became ever more convinced, to stand in front of an immensely intelligent prince, who also grasped such economic ideas with ease, which must have been completely beyond his reach before.”¹⁴³ It is unclear if Menelik allowed Rosen to make the suggestions he did not want to utter himself, or if Rosen perhaps overstated his diplomatic acumen by a notch when talking with his brother. However, the mutual sympathy and trust that had been built up in the weeks of ceremonies, gift-giving and socialising on even par rendered the negotiations an agreeable undertaking. Both sides saw that they would profit from collaboration and thus the scope of discussions increased.

In conversations on the side Rosen and Menelik talked about improving saddles for pack animals along the lines caravans in the Middle East were equipped with and how to improve the country’s forestry and maintain its agricultural productivity.¹⁴⁴ Rosen also told Menelik about German excavations in the Ottoman

141 Friedrich Rosen to AA, 2 May 1905, A 5517, R 14915, PA AA.

142 Friedrich Rosen to AA, 24 February 1905, A 3220, R 14892, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to AA, 18 March 1905, A 4720, R 14892, PA AA.

143 Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 265.

144 Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 225, 284; Felix Rosen, *Charakterpflanzen des abessinischen Hochlandes* (Jena: Gustav Fischer, 1909), 25/3, 26/1, 28/1–2.

Empire and how Germany had there participated in the quest to establish the “empirical historicity of the Old Testament”. The prospect of adding Ethiopian Christianity to the overall salvation history excited the self-declared descendant of Solomon, who sought legitimacy from an Ethiopian national-religious past. Archaeological findings promised to expand Ethiopian historical sources in manuscripts, paintings and oral traditions and lend scientific credibility.¹⁴⁵ Only a few months earlier human bones, claimed to be of Menelik I, had been excavated outside Aksum. They were laid to rest at a cathedral in the holy city of Aksum, “thus promoting one of the founding myths – the Israelite origins – of Ethiopian civilisation.”¹⁴⁶ On 26 February the British legation organised a gymkhana, a sportive festival, with horse and sack races, lancing duels and tent-pegging. In tent-pegging horsemen ride towards a small target on the ground, which they pierce with a lance. In this European-Ethiopian mixed event the participation of the Gardes du Corps was a great show. Rosen, not one to miss showing off his riding skills, borrowed Harrington’s horse, as his own had a limp, and successfully pegged three tents under the eyes of Menelik.¹⁴⁷ When Rosen found Menelik in particularly good spirits on the next day, he asked the emperor straight out if he would not give Germany the excavation rights at Aksum. Menelik agreed, and Rosen was mighty pleased with himself.¹⁴⁸

Zitelmann and Daum have analysed how with considerable diplomatic skill Rosen would in the aftermath of the mission come to orchestrate the establishment of the Deutsche Aksum Expedition under his friend from Jerusalem Enno Littmann, with the Kaiser paying the expenses out of his own pocket and Littmann being released out of his contract with Princeton University.¹⁴⁹ It is unlikely that Rosen had pre-meditated requesting excavation rights for Germany before

145 Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 266; Zitelmann, “Politische Einbettung der Aksum-Expedition,” 114; Daum, “Rosen, Littmann, Aksum,” 90.

146 Zitelmann finds in Littmann’s diary from 15 January 1906 an entry suggesting that Rosen was responsible for the excavation of the bones of Menelik I. This is not confirmed by Fiacadori’s chronology of events, as Rosen had not been in Aksum at the time of the digging in the winter of 1904/5. Rosen only arrived in Aksum in late April. Gianfranco Fiacadori, “Mənilək I,” in *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica. A Reference Work on the Horn of Africa*, vol. 3, Siegbert Uhlig (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2007), 922; Zitelmann, “Politische Einbettung der Aksum-Expedition,” 115.

147 Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 27 February 1905, ASWPC.

148 Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 6 March 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen to AA, 10 March 1905, A 4257, R 14892, PA AA.

149 Zitelmann, “Politische Einbettung der Aksum-Expedition”; Zitelmann, “Littmann”; Daum, “Rosen, Littmann, Aksum”; Enno Littmann, comp., *The Library of Enno Littman 1875 – 1958. Professor of Oriental Languages at the University Tübingen. With an Autobiographical Sketch* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1959), XVII.

the mission. In the scientific estimation of the possible value of the Rosen mission submitted by Harnack and the culture ministry, mention of Aksum is made, but nothing was said of excavations of any sort. In a proud letter to his wife Rosen wrote that the excavations ought to please the Kaiser and Harnack.¹⁵⁰ Rosen was conscious of potential political ramifications such an excavation could have internationally and in scholarly circles. He asked the Auswärtiges Amt to keep the matter confidential for the time being and that the Negus would expect a telegram from the Kaiser, thanking him for allowing Germans to excavate his holy city. The Kaiser agreed that “better not inform savants yet, they chatter like old women”. While Rosen sought to further ingratiate himself with his own sovereign and the scholarly circles around him, his scoop had also made him powerful enough to navigate the still junior scholar Littmann to the head of the Deutsche Aksum Mission, bringing Littmann back from his American “exile” and eventually resulting in a call to Straßburg university, where Littmann would replace the retired Orientalist eminence Theodor Nöldeke.¹⁵¹

The first discussion between Rosen and Menelik had, however, been on Jerusalem. The Negus and “especially the Empress” expressed their wish for Germany to help Ethiopia with pursuing its interests over the Deir es-Sultan monastery in Jerusalem. Rosen wired back to Berlin that he thought this “inopportune”, as this would pitch Germany against England, which represented Coptic interests in Jerusalem as rulers of Egypt. With the backing of the Auswärtiges Amt and in a relapse to previous German inaction, Rosen replied that Ethiopia should work with Italy on finding an arrangement on this matter.¹⁵² But as Tafla notes, Rosen accepted a document on the matter by Taitu, which he only disclosed several months after his return in Berlin.¹⁵³ This is corroborated by a request made by Ethiopian envoy Mashasha to the German consul in Jerusalem in the summer of 1905. Mashasha reminded the Germans that Menelik had given Rosen proof of the Ethiopian claims and demanded that Germany should now become active on its behalf. Already on his stop in Constantinople in April, Mashasha had approached the German legation to find support for its claims with the Ottoman

150 Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 6 March 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC.

151 Friedrich Rosen to AA, 10 March 1905, A 4257, R 14914, PA AA; Littmann, *The Library of Enno Littman 1875–1958*, XVII; *Actes du XIV^e Congrès international des Orientalistes. Alger 1905. Première Partie* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1907), 66.

152 Friedrich Rosen to AA, 23 February 1905, A 3156, R 14914, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to AA, 23 February 1905, A 3156, R 14909, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to AA, 23 February 1905, A 3156, R 14892, PA AA.

153 Tafla, *Ethiopia and Germany*, 112.

Sultan.¹⁵⁴ Rosen had written to Berlin that he would evade the topic and remain ambiguous. That ambiguity may well have enabled a successful continuation of the negotiations with several tangible results. But without finding any other allies in their quest for gaining Deir es-Sultan, German ambiguity was enough for Ethiopian representatives to come back to Germany on the matter for another two years.

Considering Menelik's infatuation with the Gardes du Corps, it is important to note the lack of military results. Krupp had approached the Auswärtiges Amt on the suggestion of Holtz before the beginning of the mission. Krupp inquired again in late February, apparently without having heard back from Rosen about their offer to send a sample piece of mountain artillery, at which point Rosen wrote Bülow that weapons were too sensitive a matter:

Bis jetzt ist die Kaiserliche Mission weder bei den Abessiniern noch bei den hiesigen diplomatischen Vertretungen dem geringsten Mißtrauen begegnet. Das Vertrauen in die Ehrlichkeit unserer rein wirtschaftlichen Bestrebungen würde jedoch sofort schwinden, wenn die Vertreter der drei Großmächte bemerkten, daß wir dem Lande Kriegswaffen lieferten, die im Ernstfalle nur gegen sie gerichtet werden könnten.

Even if the Ethiopian government was interested in weapons, such cargo would not be allowed to pass through the surrounding French, Italian or British territories. As he wrote to Bülow, Rosen had deliberated with Ilg on the matter and had finally come to the conclusion that he would not bring up weapons in his conversations with Menelik.¹⁵⁵ In an attached letter to Krupp, Rosen explained as much, with an emphasis on the Ethiopians not being able to afford artillery, but noting that Ilg had received the album with Krupp's repertoire. He would be in touch should things change.

While Rosen was negotiating, Flemming looked for manuscripts in churches and monasteries, Vollbrecht treated people, including Ras Makonen and Taitu, the trade staffers studied the markets and made connections among local merchants, and Eulenburg made sure the Gardes du Corps followed Prussian drill. Felix looked for plants and ethnographical items, writing back to his funders

154 Edmund Schmidt to Bernhard von Bülow, 28 July 1905, A 15354, R 14893, PA AA; Adolf Marschall von Bieberstein to Bernhard von Bülow, 17 April 1905, A 6750, R 14892, PA AA.

155 "Until now the imperial mission has not been met with the least suspicion by the Abyssinians or the diplomatic representations here. The trust in the honesty of our purely economic aspirations would, however, immediately wane should the representatives of the three great powers notice that we are delivering war weapons to the country, which can in a case of emergency only be directed against them." Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 2 March 1905, A5011, R 14892, PA AA.

that “skulls are not purchasable. Taking photographs of unclothed people is life-endangering”.¹⁵⁶ As the Germans became known for wanting to study everything, they were granted the wish to take along an Ethiopian scholar to Germany. Aleka Tayye, a scholar from Gondar, would become the SOS’s first teacher of Amharic, with the Orientalist Eugen Mittwoch as his first student.¹⁵⁷ Over the last weeks, Felix focused on assembling the electricity machine that the Germans had brought with them. Developing considerable eagerness and visited by Menelik and Ras Tassama several times, Felix eventually got the machine going with the help of a mechanic from the Austrian delegation that had just arrived in the Ethiopian capital. The generator, a first in Addis Ababa, was to power a Röntgen x-ray machine, which the mission had brought along as well. During one of the last evenings the generator was used to power a light show in the city, bringing the German mission to a glamorous end.¹⁵⁸

Rosen’s report on the achievements of the mission evoked in Wilhelm a congratulatory “Bravo Rosen! Hat seine Sache ganz vortrefflich gemacht. Soll hoch dekoriert werden.”¹⁵⁹ On the way back via Gondar, Aksum, Adua and Eritrea, the news of the Kaiser’s landing at Tangier reached Rosen. The mail bag was emptied on the pedestal of an ancient obelisk in Aksum on 1 May. Rosen “found al-

156 A German ethnographic manual from 1904 instructed travellers how to collect skulls and other items if this did not provoke “vexation”. Felix von Luschan, “Anleitung für ethnographische Beobachtungen und Sammlungen in Afrika und Ozeanien,” *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* 36, no. Sonderabdruck (1904): 122; Felix Rosen to Felix von Luschan, 16 March 1905, RO Afr. R., PA EMB; Johannes Flemming, “Die neue Sammlung abessinischer Handschriften auf der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin,” *Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen* 23 (1906): 8; Vollbrecht, *Im Reiche des Negus*, 61–121.

157 Enno Littmann, “Eugen Mittwoch 1876–1942,” in *Ein Jahrhundert Orientalistik. Lebensbilder aus der Feder von Enno Littmann und Verzeichnis seiner Schriften zum achtzigsten Geburtstag am 16. September 1955*, Rudi Paret, Schall, and Anton (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1955), 130.

158 Rudolf Agstner, “Les relations entre l’Éthiopie et l’Autriche,” in *Les relations entre l’Éthiopie et les nations étrangères. Histoire humaine et diplomatique (des origines à nos jours)*, Lukian Prijac (Berlin: Lit, 2015), 28; Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 278–83; Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 18 March 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 15 March 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC.

159 “Bravo Rosen! Has done his job splendidly. Shall be highly decorated.” Rosen was decorated with the highest honour of Ethiopia. As Gehring-Münzel noted, his German decoration was second rate. Internal Note, 15 March 1905, A 4257, R 14914, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to AA, 10 March 1905, A 4257, R 14914, PA AA; Ursula Gehring-Münzel, “Unser Kriegstrommeln schweigen seit Monden. Der Wein kam aus dem Borchardt: Hundert Jahre deutsch-äthiopische Freundschaft,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* 41 (18 February 2005): 46; Menelik II to Wilhelm II, 16 March 1905, A 10721, R 14915, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 15 March 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC; Menelik II, Ehrenstern von Äthiopien für Friedrich Rosen, 7 February 1905, ASWPC.

ways only the word Morocco”, accompanied by telegrams congratulating him on his appointment as envoy to Tangier. “A sense of vertigo, like when one stands at the edge of a high vertical cliff, would not leave me”, Rosen remembered.¹⁶⁰

In Eritrea then, a letter from the *Auswärtiges Amt* announced that Holtz had arrived in Berlin and had anonymously published an article with the nationalist and pro-colonialist *Tägliche Rundschau*. He derided the German mission, attacked Eulenburg and Rosen personally and clamoured national disgrace as Holtz was excluded from deals and Germany collaborated with the alleged Francophile Ilg.¹⁶¹ Considering how badly the German mission had gone for Holtz, this was not surprising. Moreover, with the mission under Rosen keeping its exploits close to its chest for fear of alienating international public opinion, Holtz could credibly argue that Germany had not reached any concessions, but had fallen for French diplomatic machinations. Mühlberg instructed Rosen to gather material in case a rebuttal should become necessary. But Felix shot back first in an article defending Ilg: “In truth his party is that of his sovereign, and his enemies are those Europeans, who want to obtain unreal profits in Ethiopia. And of those there are unfortunately many.” In a thinly veiled description, Felix described how “a European” had requested a gold mining concession from Menelik in a region where there were no gold deposits. As Menelik laughed while granting the request, the European claimed that he wanted the concession on paper only to get further funding from an ill-informed syndicate in far-away Europe.¹⁶²

As the crisis over Morocco came to a head, Rosen returned via Cairo, where he found the British representative Lord Cromer receptive to the idea of German inclusion in Ethiopia’s National Bank, which would receive half its funding from Egypt.¹⁶³ With the go-ahead from London, German banks were invited to partake at a moderate level in the shares and a German banker was appointed to the administrative board of the newly established bank alongside British, Ethiopian, French, and Italian representatives. Cromer attached little significance to the bank itself. He had only invested himself in the matter “as there was at the moment enough ‘cause of friction’ between the great powers, and that he saw it as his duty, if ever in his power, to remove all causes for alienation.”¹⁶⁴ With the

160 Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 125–26.

161 A. J., “Die deutsche Mission in Abessinien,” *Tägliche Rundschau*, 3 May 1905.

162 Felix Rosen, “Kaiser Menelik und Seine Leute.”

163 Friedrich Rosen to AA, 18 May 1905, A 8489, R 14893, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 127.

164 Martin Rücker Freiherr von Jenisch to Bernhard von Bülow, 2 June 1905, A 9821, R 14893, PA AA.

Morocco crisis on everybody's mind, the attempt of Anglo-German rapprochement via the periphery went largely unnoticed.

As Rosen returned to Berlin, Ethiopia quickly moved out of his focus, as he was sent to Paris to prepare the Algeiras conference and was slated to be posted to Tangier. In an interview Rosen gave to the *New York Times*, he praised Menelik for his "sound morals and excellent principles, even according to the European standard" and recounted that Menelik believed he was descended from King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba.¹⁶⁵ Rosen hardly found any time to proofread Felix's report of the mission and was beset by Holtz's continued lobbying.¹⁶⁶ Only the Aksum excavation Rosen arranged over the summer, reminding and pushing the Auswärtiges Amt and the Kaiser to act quickly and to see a delegation headed by Littmann on its way before Menelik had forgotten his promise. The excavation deal had not been put into writing.¹⁶⁷ With German policy in Morocco becoming more aggressive, Rosen announced as new envoy in Tangier on the way back from Ethiopia, and Holtz feeding the German colonialist press the story that the German mission had failed in achieving preponderance in Ethiopia, in the international press the Rosen mission was in the immediate aftermath regarded as a "fiasco" of German expansionist policy.¹⁶⁸ With a group of German traders arriving in Ethiopia from the Levant less than a year later, accusations were levelled that Germany had been in it for political gain all along and Ethiopia was undergoing "Germanisation".¹⁶⁹ At the same time, the signing of the British-French-Italian tripartite agreement in 1906, establishing zones of influence in Ethiopia, without any German mention or say, effectively brought the drive for

165 The article paraphrased Rosen. "Envoy Found Menelik an up-to-Date Ruler. German Minister's Report of Visit to Moroccan Court. King Wears American Hat. Declares He is a Jew and Descendant of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba," *New York Times*, 12 June 1905.

166 Felix Rosen to Felix von Luschan, 8 January 1906, RO Afr. R., PA EMB; Reinhold Klehmet to Friedrich Rosen, 1 July 1905, A 11556, R 14915, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, Aufzeichnung über Arnold Holtz, 12 July 1905, A 12285, R 14915, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Reinhold Klehmet, 20 July 1905, A 15271, R 14915, PA AA.

167 Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 21 August 1905, A 14894, R 14915, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Menelik II, 13 October 1905, A 11187, R 14915, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Felix Rosen, 28 September 1906, Felix Rosen, ASWPC; Littmann, "Rosen," 76.

168 "L'Allemagne en Abyssinie," *Journal du Caire*, 11 May 1905; "German Mission's Fiasco," *Daily Mail*, 25 May 1905; "Egypt and Abyssinia," *Egyptian Gazette*, 2 June 1905.

169 "Abessinien," *Kölnische Zeitung*, 8 June 1906; "Abessinien," *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, 17 June 1906; "Les Allemands en Abyssinie," *Le Matin*, 17 June 1906; Wilfrid Malleon, Summary of Principal Events in 1907, L/PS/20/211, BL IOR.

internationalisation and German economic-political engagement coupled with Ethiopian territorial integrity to an end.¹⁷⁰

Although Ethiopia had rapidly developed its economy and proven itself as a sovereign state in the international system in the years before, Rosen still represented a Germany that was palpably more powerful. Germany's power rested on its economic strength, technological advances, and integration into a transnational European system of knowledge and political dominance, which were difficult to access for Ethiopia. Germany entered the negotiations with a distinct advantage, as it could draw on the bodies of knowledge of the French, Italian, and British representatives – information, no matter how distorted, that was translatable into bargaining coins. At the same time, this European context constrained the negotiation positions that Germany could occupy. Sales of weapons, single-country concessions for mining, railways or banks were off the table. In Rosen's relations with the European envoys, he depended on their good will to achieve German interests and ran the danger of becoming a pawn in their hands. It was in this context that Ethiopia was a negotiation partner rather than an adversary.

Ethiopia was not powerless, even if its power did not extend much beyond its immediate borders, as the continuous Jerusalem affair demonstrated. In the Horn of Africa, the modernist-nationalist alliance Menelik had forged out of different Ethiopian, Somali and Galla leaders, and with the assistance of a few loyal Europeans, was a force to be reckoned with. Similar to the US before, Germany and its interests fit well into Ethiopia's goals of modernisation and balancing out the other Europeans. With Germany and Ethiopia cut off from direct naval contact, the scope of goals to be achieved were limited, as was clear for Rosen and Ilg from the beginning. Daum suggested that Rosen and his orchestration of a scientific mission that aimed at learning was an example of Rosen using his diplomatic acumen benevolently. This was particularly the case with the excavations in Aksum, which were carried out mostly for the purpose of allowing Ethiopians to connect to a positive and unifying national identity.¹⁷¹ As Zitelmann showed, this was a modelling of an Ethiopian nation-state along the lines of German statism, with "empires mirroring each other".¹⁷² However, while a mutual scientific or knowledge-seeking spirit played a large role in the months the German mission spent in Ethiopia, it was only the circumstances of the relative irrelevance of Ethiopia in European power politics and Germany's constrained role in the Horn of Africa that allowed for this emphasis on learning from each other.

170 "England, France and Italy in Abyssinia," *New York Times*, 29 July 1906.

171 Daum, "Rosen, Littmann, Aksum," 91–92.

172 Zitelmann, "Politische Einbettung der Aksum-Expedition," 116.

Though meaning different things for each side, learning was one way to engage that could open up other possibilities of collaboration. This worked out initially for both sides, but very quickly, with Germany tarnished due to the Morocco crisis, this new-found friendly relationship became harmful to Ethiopia, with the press already reporting in the fall of 1905 that the initiative by Menelik to internationalise the railway had been orchestrated by Germany and the US to countervail British, Italian and French influence.¹⁷³ After the in retrospect fantastically harmonious Rosen mission, German ambitions were looked upon with suspicion by European circles, and with the failing of Menelik's health and his subsequent demise the Aksum excavations also lost in significance. The success of the Sondergesandtschaft and the negotiations for both sides in early 1905 were thus primarily caused by a confluence of interests that emphasised cooperation and promised to be beneficial without too many dangers attached.

Knowledge only came into the equation as a determining factor during the mission and the negotiations itself and held little prior significance. Rosen's Oriental knowledge was a knowledge of the Arabic, Turkish and Persian worlds and he had no significant understanding of Ethiopia or the region. But Arabic was beneficial and Rosen's Oriental knowledge was useful in the sense that he brought with him a form of tolerance to cultural difference, allowing him to mitigate conflicts and prevent situations to get out of hand. Despite often feeling entirely foreign, the Germans all appear to have enjoyed the mission, even the military figure Eulenberg whom Rosen was at first most hesitant about. The reception by Somalis and Ethiopians along the way, even if mostly recorded in German sources, appears to show that this willingness to be on par was appreciated.¹⁷⁴ All of this allowed for the delegation to arrive in Addis Ababa in the first place, for its members to acclimatise and appreciate their surroundings, and to a degree overcome the lack of language abilities. Rosen's willingness to engage in the rules of Ethiopian etiquette and order his entourage to do so as well was significant for creating a positive environment conducive for negotiations.

This was especially the case as Holtz had damaged the German reputation in Ethiopia. His compatriot was not only the main hindrance he encountered in Ethiopia, but Rosen disliked the man, who so adamantly presented everything he disliked. Ill-tempered, unable to speak Amharic after years there, and unappreciative of Ethiopian culture and customs, Holtz was nominally closer to Rosen in culture – with the key difference that Rosen appreciated Ethiopia.¹⁷⁵ With Ilg,

¹⁷³ "Menelik gegen England," *General Anzeiger Frankfurt*, 27 September 1905.

¹⁷⁴ Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 26 March 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC.

¹⁷⁵ Felix Rosen, *Gesandtschaft in Abessinien*, 211, 250–51.

however, Rosen felt a sense of kinship. Of European origin, conversant in Amharic and Ethiopian culture, and even more than Rosen working for what Rosen would later call the “organic development” of an Oriental country, Ilg was crucial for the success of the German mission. No matter how meticulous Rosen’s preparations and circumspect his actions, it was in the end the culturally versed Ilg who was largely responsible for the success of the German mission, as both Rosen and his brother had no qualms in pointing out.

What made the mission and the German-Ethiopian negotiations successful was the transcendence beyond the technicalities of a friendship and trade agreement and the additional achievements were very much predicated on knowledge. Rosen engaged in diplomatic circles and tested out the grounds for additional German-Ethiopian collaboration, resulting in German participation in the banking and railway projects. Although knowing little about Ethiopia, Rosen arrived with Orientalist knowledge, which meant that he knew what the research agendas looked like in Germany and who would be a candidate for carrying out an excavation mission: his friend from Jerusalem, Littmann and not the scholar of Ge’ez Flemming, who was there alongside him.¹⁷⁶ That the Kaiser would react with enthusiasm was to be expected, considering Wilhelm’s well-known affection for archaeology.

The scientific character of the diplomatic missions was striking. Rosen spent his spare time studying Somali songs and Flemming brought home a collection of seventy manuscripts and ten scrolls. Felix recorded songs, took photos, collected daily items and found a couple of new plants; one “in bushes in the grass steppe, half sticking in the ground”, a herbaceous plant, he named *Eulenburgia Mirabilis*. Another one, a succulent evergreen tree, found in the garden of Menelik, gained the name *Euphorbia Menelikii*. Bringing along reproductions of old Ethiopian books, a scholar of Ge’ez, a doctor and a botanist with a penchant for trees and mechanical tinkering, the German mission was also willing to share its knowledge. The Germans believed in their own superiority contributing to the betterment and development of the country. As long as they stayed in political control, Menelik and his court members welcomed this involvement. Menelik’s granting the right to excavate in Aksum after Rosen showed off his lancing skills at a day of equestrian festivities spoke to the momentum the negotiations took on. Rosen and Menelik found a basis of connection and the two acting in concert created new opportunities.¹⁷⁷

176 Flemming, “Abessinische Handschriften in Berlin,” 9.

177 Felix Rosen, *Eulenburgia Mirabilis*, 6 April 1905, 4011079, Herbarium Abessinicum, HMHNUW; Felix Rosen, *Charakterpflanzen des abessinischen Hochlandes*, 27/1.

Even though Rosen was glad to leave Addis Ababa in mid-March, all of this studying, getting to know each other and eventually agreeing on a number of mutually beneficial goals was in large part also a matter of the length of time invested. While the Shah's trip to Europe lasted about the same time, his three day stay in Berlin was almost assured not to result in any tangible results. The Sondergesandtschaft, which must have cost anywhere upward from 200,000 Mark (without gifts and expenses for acquisitions), placed no such time constraints on Rosen and the Ethiopians.¹⁷⁸ But this did not remedy the European limits placed on German power alone. Lacking political potential, Rosen revived the Prussian practice of placing scholars to the Orient and thought it best to learn and spread knowledge, while benefitting his caste of Orientalist scholars, the *Auswärtiges Amt*, chancellery, the "Roi de Prusse for whom I am working", himself and also the Ethiopians.¹⁷⁹ Shortly before Rosen's departure from Ethiopia this mix of abilities and motives, largely congruent with Menelik's aspirations to develop his country and maintain independence, had the Negus Negesti write to Wilhelm: "Ihr werther Gesandter Dr Rosen war mir sehr sympathisch und sein Wissen hat mir sehr gefallen. Deswegen haben Wir ihn zu unserem Freunde gemacht."¹⁸⁰

4 Imperial Rivalry and the Limits of Knowledge. Presenting Credentials to Sultan Mulai 'Abd al-'Aziz IV of Morocco in 1906

Friedrich Rosen's journey from Tangier to Fez in the fall of 1906 to present his diplomatic credentials to the Moroccan Sultan Mulai 'Abd al-'Aziz IV was at first sight just that – a simple act of diplomatic protocol. Rosen had been appointed German envoy at Tangier in March 1905 and arrived in Morocco in November of that year. Although Fez was the Moroccan capital, the European legations were located at Tangier. While an international conference at Algeiras on the other side of the Strait of Gibraltar negotiated the terms under which Moroc-

178 Konrad von Studt and Otto von Mühlberg to Wilhelm II, 20 December 1904, A 19757, R 14914, PA AA; Bosch, *Karawanen-Reisen*, 142.

179 Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 15 March 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC.

180 "Your valued envoy Dr Rosen I found very sympathetic and I was pleased by his knowledge. Therefore, We have made him our friend." Menelik II to Wilhelm II, 16 March 1905, A 10721, R 14915, PA AA; Menelik II, Ehrenstern von Äthiopien für Friedrich Rosen, 7 February 1905, ASWPC.

co was to be reformed during the first months of 1906, Rosen stayed in Tangier without accreditation. By late February the Sultan expressed the wish for Rosen to come to Fez to be accredited. A year earlier the German envoy to Portugal, Christian von Tattenbach, had spent several months in Fez after the Kaiser's landing in Tangier to intervene against reforms advocated forcefully by French envoy Georges Saint-René Taillandier. Tattenbach's presence in Fez had aggravated German-French tensions.¹⁸¹ If Germany wanted to avoid accusations of conspiring with Morocco behind the backs of the other Europeans, Rosen was bound to wait with his accreditation trip to Fez for the completion of the Algeciras conference. Reminded again about the matter of accreditation by the Moroccan representative in Tangier after the conclusion of the conference in mid-April 1906, Rosen agreed that this should happen promptly, but noted that the travelling season was coming to an end and that preparations for the caravan would take time. The German envoy would journey to Fez after the summer break in September. This would also allow enough time for the Moroccans to ratify the treaty worked out at Algeciras and Rosen would not cause a stir by his mere appearance before ratification.¹⁸²

Originally set for the middle of September, the departure of Rosen and his entourage was then postponed to the end of the month, as the American envoy Samuel Gummere had in the meantime also made arrangements to present his credentials in Fez and was due to leave Tangier with a "vast caravan" on 15 September. The *Chicago Daily Tribune* reported that the situation had run hot the diplomatic telegraph-wires Tangier-Washington-Berlin-Tangier. Supposedly, Gummere had depleted Tangier's pack animal market, after renting "fifty mules, fifty asses, and fifty dromedaries". This started a rivalry of Gummere's and Rosen's vanities, the two men frantically running through little Tangier in search of donkeys, each envoy wanting to arrive in Fez first. The article observed it to be "probably the only case on record where arbitrage in jackasses nearly brought about international complications."¹⁸³ None of this happened. Rosen was actually still on holidays in Berlin when the overlapping of missions was flagged by the US State Department. The situation was resolved amicably with the Germans postponing their journey by ten days to avoid a double diplomatic presence in Fez. Encapsulated in this harmless episode was, however, the

¹⁸¹ Mai, *Marokko-Deutsche*, 294; Clark, *Schlafwandler*, 211–15.

¹⁸² Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 22 April 1906, Personalakten 12576, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 271–72.

¹⁸³ "Gummere Off to Fez Like Sheikh. Vast Caravan Accompanies the American Minister to Visit Sultan. Ironing Boards Big Item," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 26 September 1906, 3.

jittery reporting of the international press about what did and did not happen in Morocco, often taking on a dynamics of its own in influencing diplomatic relations.¹⁸⁴ In the aftermath of the Kaiser landing at Tangier and the high profile Algeciras conference, the world also took an interest in journeys of a diplomatic procedure, and rightly so. During his four-week stay in Fez, Rosen discussed the next steps of action with the Sultan and his court. Only bit by bit did the extent of agreements Rosen reached with the Moroccans transpire. Matters of culture and knowledge played a considerable role in the negotiations themselves and in the journey from Tangier to Fez and back. Equally important was the show the German envoy put on display for a larger audience in Morocco and globally.

In equally grand form as Gummere Rosen departed Tangier on 22 September to make the 270 km trip to the inland capital. His entourage consisted of a dozen German representatives. The majority were once again Gardes du Corps for decorative purposes, the retired German officer Georg Tschudi and a junior officer. Rosen was accompanied by Nina and his two sons Oscar and Georg on the journey. Rosen had not grown fond of Tangier, which he found dirty and a tourist trap for European cruises. Nina visiting the wives at the Sultan's court would be advantageous, but mostly Rosen wanted his sons to see Fez, renowned for its learning, architecture and culture.¹⁸⁵ Taking his family along, however, also meant that they would not ride to Fez at speed. Rosen justified this leisurely pace in his memoirs as befitting to an Oriental grandee, who demonstrated refinement by a large caravan travelling slowly – a rule he sought to emulate. As Mangold has analysed, this “Oriental slowness” was in parts a retroactive idealisation of the journey when Rosen grappled with the upheavals of modernity in the Weimar era. The politics of his mission, however, were blinded out by Rosen in his memoirs.¹⁸⁶ If compared to Gummere's journey and contextualised in the conflicts arising out of expropriation of the rural population in the Moroccan countryside due to Europeans buying up land, Rosen's orchestration of “Oriental slowness” at the time appreciates in significance.¹⁸⁷

Rosen and his retinue took eleven days to reach Fez. Gummere with an equally large entourage took only five days. As the secretary of the US mission

184 Hermann Speck von Sternburg to AA, 1 September 1906, A 14992, R 15508, PA AA; Osterhammel, *Verwandlung der Welt*, 72, 678, 721; Clark, *Schlafwandler*, 303–11.

185 Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 248–50.

186 Mangold, “Oriental Slowness”; Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 272–312.

187 Edmund Burke III, “Mouvement sociaux et mouvement de resistance au Maroc: La grande Siba de la Chaouia (1903–1907),” *Hespéris-Tamuda* 17 (1976/1977): 149–63; Pascal R Venier, “French Imperialism and Pre-Colonial Rebellions in Eastern Morocco, 1903–1910,” *Journal of North African Studies* 2, no. 2 (1997): 57–58.

reported, it was still too hot to ride more than four to five hours a day along the caravan path of gravel and dried up river beds. But while heat should slow down these caravans, what sped them up was the perceived insecurity of the land. The Americans were “provided with a strong escort of Moroccan soldiers, but the Sultan did not trust the bravery of these to protect his distinguished visitors from the tribes of the desert.”¹⁸⁸ Reports of “anarchy” in Morocco in the western press were the order of the day. Bandits robbed caravans, kidnapped Europeans, and ambushed Europeans out of anti-Christian sentiments. The Sultan lacked authority and, so went the reports, could not guarantee security in the countryside.

In this context on the first day of the US journey the *New York Times* reported that it was “a significant fact that Rais Uli, the bandit chief, sent presents” to the US delegation.¹⁸⁹ Mulai Ahmed er-Raisuni, known as Raisuli in the West, was in 1906 the Moroccan governor of the countryside surrounding Tangier; he had previously made a career of kidnapping Westerners for ransom and as leverage for political gain with the Sultan. His ascendance to governor demonstrated his success. This had, however, made him a despised figure among many westerners for whom he came to embody the lawlessness of the country, which would only stop if a proper, that is European, police regiment was installed. For the vast majority of westerners based in Tangier, Raisuli was a bogeyman. He was feared, and fear of him was exploited for political gain.

Although the American mission had, like the German, appeared at first to be entirely ceremonial, it soon transpired that Gummere was in Fez to press the Sultan for indemnities for the (fake) American citizen Perdicaris, whom Raisuli had captured in 1904, and to guarantee the future security of US citizens. To underline the point, three American ships appeared before Moroccan shores.¹⁹⁰ Given the supposed anarchy of the land and the animosity towards Raisuli, the American delegation had thus no intention of spending too much time on the journey.

Rosen’s intentions were different. Still branded as a bandit and not recognised by any other European legation, Rosen had entered backchannel relations with Raisuli. The governor provided security to Rosen whenever he left Tangier.

188 “Back from Morocco; Met the Sultan in Fez. Secretary Iselin Tells of His Trip with Minister Gummere,” *New York Times*, 19 November 1906.

189 “Gummere Starts for Fez. It’s the First Visit of any American Minister-Presents from Rais Uli,” *New York Times*, 16 September 1906.

190 “Our Demands on Morocco. Importance of Gummere’s Mission to Fez Being Underestimated,” *New York Times*, 18 September 1906; “Gummere Mission Fails. American Gets No Satisfaction from Morocco, It Is Reported,” *New York Times*, 30 November 1906; Edmund Dene Morel, *Morocco in Diplomacy* (London: Smith, Elder & Co, 1912), 114.



Fig. 4.3. “Oscar leads the caravan.” Journey of the German delegation from Tangier to Fez, September 1906.

Berlin knew this and Rosen was backed from up high. Wilhelm II fancied Raisuli to be a Moroccan Götz von Berlichingen, a Franconian knight who gained fame for his battles and poetry in the German Peasants’ War in the sixteenth century and popularised in the late eighteenth century by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe as a free-spirited national figure, transcending the feudal system, fighting for the poor and sticking it to the man.¹⁹¹ As had been the case with the American mission, on their way out of Tangier gifts from Raisuli awaited the Germans. To demonstrate that the countryside was safe from banditry and secured by its governor, Rosen organised a dinner for the European diplomatic corps of Tangier in the countryside on the first evening of the journey to Fez. On the way to Fez and back, Rosen continued to celebrate this show of peace in the land, accepting the invitation to dine with locals every 25 km or so.

191 Ernst Langwerth von Simmern to Bernhard von Bülow, 17 November 1906, A19215, R 15493, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, 1926, Hinterlassene Manuskripte I, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 93; Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Götz von Berlichingen mit der eisernen Hand* (London: D. Rutt, 1840), 91–92.

An incidence of violence outside Tangier in October thwarted Rosen's public relations work. Seen gravely in European quarters it precipitated the movement of Spanish and French ships to the Moroccan coast and a false rumour made the rounds among the scared Europeans in Tangier that the Germans and the Americans were stuck in Fez because of the insecurity in the countryside. The rumour was false. The duration of the stay of the Germans and Americans in the capital was due to ongoing political negotiations.¹⁹² When Rosen arrived back in Tangier he was astounded by the commotion in the harbour city about an insecurity in the land which he had not felt. Rosen was not alone in observing that reports of violence and disturbances were often unconfirmed, tended to be exaggerated and took on a life of their own, after they travelled from wherever in the large country they took place via Tangier into the Western press. There were instances of violence to be sure, but German consular reports from Fez, Casablanca and Marrakesh found the supposed Moroccan "anarchy" to be a myth.¹⁹³ This dissenting reading was also found in the local English press and was supported by the liberal British "trouble maker" Edmund Dene Morel and French socialists.¹⁹⁴ An article in *Al-Moghreb Al-Aksa* put the blame for the disturbances squarely at the feet of the impositions of Algeciras. Nine-tenths of the Moroccan population were opposed to a Franco-Spanish police force, the Sultan's submission to Algeciras constituting

the last straw to break the back of the Makhzen's [Sultan's court] authority. Hence the wholesale pillage of the trade caravans, the paralysis of commerce, and the deadly hostility to every kind of imported reform... To many of us sojourners in the Land of Sunset it appears, indeed, that the indiscreet vapourings of the "penetration" press are responsible for half the troubles now afflicting all foreign residents.¹⁹⁵

As Rosen reported to Berlin, the consequence of Morocco becoming in the European imaginary one big chaos was that unrelated events in the country were put into a non-existent context: "Nothing is more contagious than fear and

192 Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, *Documents diplomatiques. Affaires du Maroc. 1906–1907* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1907), 85; "Anarchy in Morocco. France and Spain to Send War Ships to Protect Their Subjects," *Washington Post*, 27 October 1906, 5; *New York Times*, 26 October 1906.

193 Ernst Langwerth von Simmern to Bernhard von Bülow, 13 July 1906, A 12779, R 15493, PA AA; Ernst Langwerth von Simmern to Bernhard von Bülow, 19 August 1906, A 14673, R 15493, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 28 June 1906, A 11780, R 15493, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 11 December 1906, A 21073, R 15493, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 16 October 1906, A 17897, R 15493, PA AA.

194 Morel, *Morocco in Diplomacy*, 101–2, 114; Taylor, *Trouble Makers*, 96.

195 "Disturbed Morocco," *Al-Moghreb Al-Aksa*, 10 November 1906.

thus even usually calm thinking people had persuaded themselves that we were at the eve of horrific events.”

In another instance the German envoy intercepted a telegram from France that ordered a press story intended to scandalise Raisuli. Rosen speculated that parts of the press had been bought by colonial circles in France wanting to orchestrate or portray insecurities in the country to open up financial and political resources in the metropole to speed up the introduction of the police force in Morocco.¹⁹⁶ An article in *Le Matin* titled “Call to arms. Morocco preaches holy war” reinforced such assumptions among the German diplomats, who thought the holy war fright exaggerated. Rosen contrasted this portrayal with reports that the people in Morocco were very friendly and welcoming, particularly to those who spoke Arabic and were open to them.¹⁹⁷ It was not genuine understanding that mattered, but the politeness and fearlessness the Germans expressed reinforced a friendly German image that had prevailed since the Kaiser’s landing in Tangier the year before. This positive Moroccan disposition allowed Rosen to foster relations in the countryside, learn a bit about the land and its people, and speak of peace in the countryside when he returned to diplomatic Tangier: for him and his travelling party it had been peaceful. But the Europeans in the city thought he was pulling their leg. In fact, instead of having demonstrated to his diplomatic cohort security outside the city walls, Rosen had given reason to believe that he was conspiring with Raisuli and by the end of the year saw himself forced to “contradict rumours that Raisuli... hoisted the German flag” at his castle in Zinnath.¹⁹⁸ Rather than dispelling European fears, or breaking the news cycle, Rosen’s demonstrations of fearlessness intensified the discourse by associating the quarrelsome Germans with the Moroccans.

The German delegation arrived in Fez on 2 October. With their Gardes du Corps and officers wearing full costume and heavy silver eagle helmets, they left quite an impression with their hosts. While the US delegation had like the German delegation been received outside the city gates by several thousand

196 Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 27 November 1906, A 20342, R 15493, PA AA.

197 Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 27 November 1906, A 20342, R 15493, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to AA, 1 March 1907, A 3439, R 15493, PA AA; René Moulin, “Appel aux armes. Le Maroc prêche la guerre sainte,” *Le Matin*, 21 October 1906; “Les Marocains veulent attaque la France,” *Le Matin*, 15 October 1906; “Le Maroc et nous,” *Le Temps*, 14 October 1906; Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 251.

198 Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 13 November 1906, A 19598, R 15508, PA AA; “Morocco. Rumour Contradicted,” *South China Morning Post*, 2 January 1907, 7; “Parteien und Parteiführer in Marokko,” *Münchener Allgemeine Zeitung*, 2 October 1906; Morel, *Morocco in Diplomacy*, 115.

men, only the German delegation was on the day of the official reception accorded guards of honour all the way from the German residence to the royal palace. The court had prompted the city's notables to organise a particularly festive reception for the Germans, and the press picked up on the difference.¹⁹⁹ At the reception itself gifts were presented, most of which were rather "usual", as Rosen and the press reported.²⁰⁰ There were a couple of exceptions. The German delegation had brought a miniature wireless telegraph, which Rosen had wanted Tschudi to present to the Sultan 'Abd al-'Aziz, known to be an admirer of all things European and technological. The Sultan suggested that this would break the ceremony and Tschudi should return on the next day with the telegraph.²⁰¹ Another set of gifts were a number of books, many of which were German prints of Arabic works, and Rosen was able to impress the "astonished" Sultan with the news that there were some twenty universities in Germany where Arabic was taught. On top of the stack was the German production of the *Divan* of Selim I, a sixteenth century Ottoman ruler who had written poetry in Persian. As Kreiser has shown, the volume had been re-produced by the Iranists Paul Horn and Oskar Mann with the support of Rosen in the *Auswärtiges Amt* for the Ottoman Sultan Abdülhamid in the years before. The original dedication to the Ottoman Sultan printed on one of the first pages had been glued together with the previous page. Although in Persian, the Moroccan Sultan 'Abd al-'Aziz was "apparently much pleased" with the gift and asked Rosen to read from the first page.²⁰²

Rosen's main source of information about Fez had been the long-time German consul Philipp Vassel at Fez. Through Vassel, who was not in Fez at the time, Rosen had learned that the Tassi brothers – one the finance minister, another a banker, a third the lord protector of Fez and a confidant of the Sultan – would be most important for gaining influence at the Sultan's court. Rosen bought them off by offering the banker to be placed on the board of an international banking consortium in exchange for their support at court.²⁰³ With the

199 "Rosen Enters Fez in Great Pomp," *New York Times*, 9 October 1906; "The German Mission to Fez," *Manchester Guardian*, 12 October 1906, 6; Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 13 November 1906, A 19598, R 15508, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 281.

200 "Many Gifts from Kaiser. German Mission Presents Them to the Sultan of Morocco," *New York Times*, 12 October 1906.

201 Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 287.

202 Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 6 October 1906, A 17339, R 15508, PA AA; Kreiser, "Divan for the Sultan," 283.

203 Klaus Vassel, *Berlinische und marokkanische Erlebnisse meines Vaters 1873–1911* (Aachen: Wilhelm Metz, 1975), 94; Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 286.

Sultan sufficiently assuaged as to German intentions and with the Tassi brothers on the German side as well, Rosen turned to a private audience with the foreign minister Si 'Abd el Krim Ben Sliman, whom Rosen had known to be aligned with French interests for reasons of expediency. After finding only a lukewarm welcome with Ben Sliman, what broke the ice was, in Rosen's words, his speaking in Arabic and their conversations quickly drifting to matters of history, culture, sciences and architecture.²⁰⁴ According to Rosen's memoirs, they also talked business, but the diplomatic reports do not indicate that any of the deals were done in the presence of Ben Sliman. On the contrary, the foreign minister appears to have been adequately distanced from the deals so that he could impress "very categorically" upon the French representative Eugène Regnault several months later that all deals in Fez that autumn had been done between Rosen and the Sultan alone and without his knowledge.²⁰⁵ It is not clear if Rosen managed to mollify the foreign minister and thus prevented immediate leaks to the French or if Ben Sliman simply calculated that amid the state of things the risk of alienating his French interlocutors was worth the gamble on the Germans bringing some relief to the heavily embattled court.

After having taken a beating together at Algeciras, the show the Germans had put on display in the procession to Fez and Rosen's interest in traditions and culture of the venerable centre of the formerly mighty Sharifian empire confirmed the commitment expected of the Germans. With Algeciras ratified, but the police forces not yet on Moroccan grounds, a close collaboration with Germany was the last chance to preserve some sort of control. It is doubtful that only the niceties of expressing interest in Moroccan culture and history created an opening for collaboration. Rosen was a last chance and the Moroccans had no other options that was all. In one regard Rosen's knowledge did prove advantageous though. Talking alone with the Sultan in Arabic without the help of a Moroccan interpreter ensured confidentiality on the most sensitive matters.²⁰⁶

With the ungrateful task of having to stand behind Algeciras and the impending French police mission, Rosen negotiated a few concrete matters of more or less advantage to both sides. The two sides agreed on a German-Moroccan *modus operandi* regarding the implementation of the Algeciras agreement, which included next to the police reforms a bundle of legal, financial and eco-

204 Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 16 November 1906, A 19601, R 15508, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 286; Karl Emil Schabinger von Schowingen, *Weltgeschichtlicher Mosaiksplitter. Erlebnisse und Erinnerungen eines kaiserlichen Dragomans*, Karl Friedrich Schabinger von Schowingen (Baden-Baden: Selbstverlag, 1967), 34–36.

205 Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, *Affaires du Maroc 1906–1907*, 176.

206 Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 287.

monic reforms to be partially worked out by the Moroccan government and partially by European diplomats in Tangier. The Moroccans would consult the German envoy on all moves made by the French. Rosen noted: “Dies sichert den Marokkanern eine technische Hülfe, deren sie unbedingt bedürfen, uns jedoch eine vermehrte Einwirkung auf die Gestaltung der Bedingungen, mit welchen wir für die Zukunft zu rechnen haben werden.” The arrangement also included the replacement of former Krupp liaison and German engineer Walter Rothenburg in Moroccan service. The retired officer Tschudi would take his place and become the new public works’ consultant of the Sultan. Tschudi would be in a position to prevent France from gaining concessions and to ensure sympathetic consideration of German requests.²⁰⁷ Another German officer was to take on the training of the Moroccan cavalry. Furthermore, the extension of the harbour of Tangier by a German syndicate was agreed upon “in binding and also externally incontestable form”. ‘Abd al-‘Aziz also agreed to harbour constructions south of Tangier at Larash, to include German bankers on the board of Morocco’s state bank, and to have Morocco’s only gunboat, the “Turki”, revamped in Germany. Its German commander Leonhard Karow had approached Rosen on the matter. In the future boats would be purchased from Krupp, the Sultan promised.²⁰⁸ In other good news for German enterprise, the businessman Reinhard Mannesmann received preferential rights over iron mining in the country, which would be formalised after a mining law had come into effect.

The mining matter had been driven by Mannesmann, a German industrialist, who had come to Morocco on honeymoon and toured the country along its shores on the “Turki”. The appearance of Mannesmann had quickly aroused French suspicions.²⁰⁹ Before his summer holiday in Germany Rosen had tried to keep the industrialist away from German politics and told him to approach the Sultan on his own, with the incentive of including the Moroccans in the profits. In Rosen’s absence Mühlberg cautioned the chargé d’affaires Ernst Langwerth von Simmern that the situation was difficult, as open collaboration with

207 “This secures a technical help for the Moroccans, which they absolutely need, but for us it secures an increased influence on the formation of the conditions with which we have to contend for the future.” Friedrich Rosen to AA, 20 October 1906, A 17689, R 15508, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 13 November 1906, A 19598, R 15508, PA AA; Jonathan G. Katz, *Murder in Marrakesh. Émile Mauchamp and the French Colonial Adventure* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 171.

208 Leonhard Karow, *Neun Jahre in marokkanischen Diensten* (Berlin: Wilhelm Wicher, 1909), 217; Gunther Mai, *Die Marokko-Deutschen 1873–1918. Kurzbiographien* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014), 92.

209 “Germans in Morocco,” *Manchester Guardian*, 17 April 1906, 7.

Mannesmann could be read as disloyal in the spirit of the Algeciras agreement. At the same time, however, the German government wanted to support its industrialists. Could the Sultan not be motivated to work with Mannesmann without official German participation? But Mannesmann, who had in the meantime relocated to Fez, pressured the German government, as he had gotten wind that French industrialists were also working on attaining mining rights.²¹⁰ After his return from Berlin, Rosen brought Mannesmann into the loop, first – unofficially – pressing for his preferential rights with the Sultan, and then including Mannesmann and other German business representatives in the drafting of a mining law for the Moroccan court to adopt, thus enabling Mannesmann to translate his preferential rights into real concessions.²¹¹ At Fez, Rosen met with Mannesmann and worked on the industrialist's behalf, although he disliked his impertinence. Later they became embroiled in a protracted conflict over the intricacies of concession law, which would pit the Alldeutsche colonialist circles against the Auswärtiges Amt.²¹²

On the results of his discussions at the Sultan's court, Rosen noted in a telegram to Berlin, that Deutsche Bank, Krupp and the German-Moroccan syndicate of business should be pleased with these achievements. The marginalia indicate that the Auswärtiges Amt was more skeptical and thought that most of these achievements were momentary and not secured.²¹³ With the exception of the posting of Tschudi and the cavalry officer to the Sultan's court, the agreements were not politically insignificant but driven by the economic interests of Germans in Morocco or the mission of Auswärtiges Amt to pander to large business interests in Germany. There were bits and pieces in these projects for the Moroccan government and state as well, but essentially these were piecemeal German projects foisted on Morocco. The Sultan accepted the German proposals, as Germany was his only chance for delaying French encroachments. Rosen wrote to Bülow that "the Sultan unashamedly expressed his gratitude for his majesty

210 Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 4 May 1906, A 63, R 15493, PA AA; Otto von Mühlberg to Ernst Langwerth von Simmern, 7 July 1906, A 9125, R 16039, PA AA; Ernst Langwerth von Simmern to AA, 13 July 1906, A 9125, R 16039, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Ernst Landwerth von Simmern, 14 July 1906, A 12293, R 16039, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 20 September 1906, A 16312, R 16039, PA AA.

211 Friedrich Rosen to AA, 8 November 1906, A 16312, R 16039, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 5 March 1907, A 3697, R 16039, PA AA.

212 Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 294297; Vassel, *Berlinische und marokkanische Erlebnisse*, 95–97; Heinrich von Eckardt to Friedrich Rosen, 24 April 1909, A 1036, 1906–10, ASWPC; Heinrich von Eckardt to Friedrich Rosen, 17 April 1909, A 1036, 1906–10, ASWPC; Hermann von Rotenhan to Friedrich Rosen, 24 April 1909, 1906–10, ASWPC.

213 Friedrich Rosen to AA, 26 October 1906, A 16312, R 16039, PA AA.

the Kaiser and King, in whom he beholds his rescuer”.²¹⁴ This gratitude was also expressed through a gift to Rosen of a “pageant saddle in green velvet and brocade, as green is the holy colour of Islam and is generally not bestowed to Christians”.²¹⁵ Overall, strengthening of German interests and weakening French control amounted to a reversal of the structures of influence at the court of Fez. Rosen had landed a small coup, and the Kaiser was pleased.²¹⁶

In ostensible contradiction to these positive results of his discussions, Rosen sent a longer report, that Wilhlem equally praised: “All my foreign ministers should report like this.” In this report, Rosen outlined the larger picture of the situation at Fez and in Morocco. In a cultural-historical tour de force Rosen posited that Fez rivalled Damascus for its splendour, a centre of learning, culture and sciences. The ossification of Moroccan culture in Fez, however, had caused a pull back of the state from the surrounding countryside into the city walls. The stagnation in the countryside led to decay, which was only sped up by European encroachments. The Sultan had been and continued to be a modernist, but having ascended the throne at the age of sixteen, he had been abused by the people around him and the Europeans, who took advantage of his inexperience. The Sultan had come under attack from the more pious quarters of the country for his penchant for European gadgets, which was largely intensified by his inability to quell unrest and preserve the territorial integrity of the country against French and Spanish machinations. Rosen had tried to impress upon the Sultan that if Algeciras was adhered to with German help the situation could still be turned around, but he found the Sultan largely apathetic, often not wanting to know details or being kept in the dark by the people around him.²¹⁷ Rosen had hardly believed that Morocco could be preserved as a sovereign state before he had travelled to Fez, but by the end of his stay he found that there was no one in the city who would be able to improve the situation. Opening his report with the words “who is so lucky to have seen Fez, the singular capital of western Islam among the great cities of the Muslim countries”, the report was intended for Bülow and the leadership in Berlin to know what German foreign policy could expect from crumbling Morocco and Islamic countries in the future. Wilhelm commented “now we have some clarity where we stand and with whom we are dealing.”²¹⁸

214 Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 13 November 1906, A 19598, R 15508, PA AA.

215 Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 13 November 1906, A 19598, R 15508, PA AA; Theilhaber, “Bestände Rosen Detmold”.

216 Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 13 November 1906, A 19598, R 15508, PA AA.

217 Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 16 November 1906, A 19601, R 15508, PA AA; Morel, *Morocco in Diplomacy*, 41.

218 Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 16 November 1906, A 19601, R 15508, PA AA.

In the direct aftermath of the Fez trip Rosen's position strengthened at the Sultan's court and economic prospects looked promising enough to start working on the mining law with Mannesmann. But only a couple of weeks after his return to Tangier on 6 November Rosen wrote to Berlin that he was in an inferior position against the French representative Regnault at Tangier's diplomatic council, noting that with the introduction of the inevitable Franco-Spanish police force, all other considerations and German actions in the country would become obsolete.²¹⁹ As the Raisuli situation at Tangier began to boil over and the arrival of French and Spanish warships at Tangier increased the hand of Regnault, the French representative pressed for punitive action against the Sultan's governor. Playing for time, Rosen intervened by insisting with the diplomatic corps in Tangier that such an action overstepped the limitations of Algeciras, and suggested that it was only legitimised in the 10 km zone around Tangier in which the treaty allowed European land purchases. The council agreed. Through his channels at the court in Fez, "the wicked Teuton" Rosen, as he became known by then in the international press, moved the Sultan to use his latest French loan to assemble an army of 1,500 men and move on Raisuli's mountain fort at Zinnath, thus implementing the demands of the diplomats in Tangier and leading to a pull back of the Franco-Spanish fleet.²²⁰ This maintained Moroccan sovereignty for a stretch longer, and calmed press attention for the moment, but with that the Sultan had exhausted his finances and the force disintegrated outside of Tangier amid outstanding payments.

Rosen had failed with his ostentatious "Oriental slow travelling" to calm European nerves in Tangier or swing public opinion beyond. He could also not bring the French dominated diplomatic council to recognise Raisuli as governor, even less so with a Franco-Spanish fleet on the shores. Instead Rosen sacrificed in Raisuli a partner to preserve the sovereign Sultan and the influence Germany still had with him.²²¹ With the forlornness of Germany's position in Morocco becoming clear, Rosen wrote to Bülow that he had until this point pursued a strat-

219 Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 6 November 1906, A19216, R 15508, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 27 November 1906, A 20342, R 15493, PA AA.

220 Friedrich Rosen to AA, 19 December 1906, A 21103, R 15493, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to AA, 20 November 1906, A 19952, R 15875, PA AA; "The Fleets at Tangier. Sultan Intends to Greet French Admiral?" *Manchester Guardian*, 6 December 1906, 7; Friedrich Rosen to AA, 14 January 1907, A 702, R 15493, PA AA; Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, *Affaires du Maroc 1906–1907*, 124; Albrecht Mendelssohn Bartholdy and Friedrich Thimme, eds., *Die Auswärtige Politik des Deutschen Reiches. 1871–1914* (Berlin: Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft für Politik und Geschichte, 1928), 736; Morel, *Morocco in Diplomacy*, 41, 115.

221 Morel, *Morocco in Diplomacy*, 43; Ernst Langwerth von Simmern to Bernhard von Bülow, 17 November 1906, A19215, R 15493, PA AA; Karow, *In marokkanischen Diensten*, 232.

egy of following Regnault in all things agreed upon at Algeciras, but had resisted on actions against Morocco beyond this point. This had worked so far without scandal, but would not last long, as Germany would continuously be the only voice of opposition in the council: “Der deutsche Widerstand würde mit der Zeit seitens der Franzosen zu unbequem empfunden werden, als dass sie nicht auf Mittel sinnen sollten, mit Hülfe der auf ihrer Seite stehenden Mächte ihre Pläne zu verwirklichen und uns zur schliesslichen Zustimmung zu bewegen.” Germany would lose all influence in the country to France eventually. Rosen suggested that Germany should “obtain an equivalent from France” while it still had influence.²²² There was no response from Berlin, which Mai analyses as follows: “The old dilemma manifested: Germany had too little interest. The government did not want more but to occupy and distract France [in Morocco].”²²³ Similarly, the knowledge that had been generated by Rosen’s journey to Fez provoked little effect on policymaking. The Kaiser, not particularly interested in Morocco anyhow, saw himself validated in Rosen’s report. The Auswärtiges Amt, with state secretary Oswald von Richthofen just having died of *karoshi* and Bülow embroiled in the Eulenberg-Harden affair, ignored what Rosen had learned about Moroccan affairs and how this would affect Germany’s position in European powerpolitics.²²⁴

Shortly later, the French press reported that the German officer Tschudi would replace the former chief engineer at the Sultan’s court and would take along another German officer to Fez, and speculated if they would equip the sultan with Krupp weapons. Confronted by Regnault, Rosen did not convincingly dispel his suspicions, and in the first months of 1907 Rosen’s visit in Fez became associated in the international press with German intrigues that drove the Moroccan resistance.²²⁵ As the Moroccans continued to consult Rosen on how to react to French demands and suggestions, Rosen became, as he wrote, an executor of French wishes with the Moroccans. By the spring of 1907, Rosen asked the sultan to no longer consult him, and Vassel in Fez reported that he lost access to the goings-on at the sultan’s court, that the Tassi brothers were removed from

222 “The German resistance would with the time be conceived as too bothersome for the French for them not to devise the means with the help of the powers on their side to realise their plans and finally drive us acquiesce.” Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 21 December 1906, A 215914, R 15508, PA AA.

223 Mai, *Marokko-Deutsche*, 320.

224 As Winzen notes, Bülow had in fact been pursuing colonial interests in Morocco. Clark, *Schlafwandler*, 264–265; Winzen, *Bülow*, 319–31; Winzen, *Ende der Kaiserherrlichkeit*, 29–38.

225 “Les Allemands au Maroc,” *Le Temps*, 8 February 1907; Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, *Affaires du Maroc 1906–1907*, 159, 165–66; Mai, *Marokko-Deutsche*, 319.

power and that the French-leaning Ben Sliman was again firmly in charge.²²⁶ Then, in March 1907 the French doctor and agent Mauchamp was murdered in Marrakesh. The death of the doctor was instrumentalised by the French and international press to construct a story of civilised supremacy over backward Morocco. Rosen stayed away from the commemorative ceremonies and the press allotted blame to him for the inconsiderateness of his not siding more pronouncedly with the French in a situation when Oriental, Islamic fanaticism was supposed to have killed an enlightened figure of European civilisation.²²⁷

In international diplomatic circles Rosen was scolded for his lack of “tact” in the matter. Holstein and Bülow used Rosen as a scapegoat, agreeing with British circles that he was a “careerist” and sought the limelight of the press to make a name for himself. When Rosen left for summer holidays in 1907, the press thought that he would not return.²²⁸ At the time a Berlin newspaper summed up Rosen’s visit to Fez with a dialogue of two ordinary Berliners:

Schultze. Kennste Rosen?

Müller. Na, wo werd’ ick denn keene Rosen kennen.

Schultze. Ick meeen nich de Blume, sondern den Jesandten in Marokko.

Müller. Ach so! Kenne ick ooch. Er war bein Sultan und hat ihm ‘nen lenkbaren Luftballon jeschenkt.

226 Friedrich Rosen to AA, 14 April 1907, A 6028, R 15493, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to AA, 15 March 1907, A 4798, R 15493, PA AA.

227 Vassel blamed Rosen for Mauchamp’s death: after Tschudi interested the sultan in telegraphy, French groups got wind of this and moved fast in setting up a telegraph system on their own – illegally. Rosen had Vassel tell the sultan to intervene against the illegal French system. The sultan ordered his police to stop such constructions. Mauchamp had put up a weather antenna on his house, which the police mistook for a telegraphy mast. Mauchamp resisted his arrest and died in the police action. Chronologically, the story does not add up as the Germans had lost their influence in Fez at that point. Walter B. Harris, “France and Germany in Morocco. Charges Against the German Minister,” *Times*, 16 July 1907; “Morocco Expects Aid from Germany,” *New York Times*, 28 April 1907; Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 23 April 1907, A 6907, R 15493, PA AA; Ellen Amster, “The Many Deaths of Dr. Emile Mauchamp: Medicine, Technology, and Popular Politics in Pre-Protectorate Morocco, 1877–1912,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 36, no. 3 (August 2004): 409; Grasset, *A travers la Chaouïa avec le corps de débarquement de Casablanca (1907–1908)* (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1911), 1–6; Vassel, *Berlinische und marokkanische Erlebnisse*, 98–99.

228 Maximilian Harden and Holstein agreed that Rosen was the “Huckebein unserer Marokkopolitik” – the jinxed and evil crow of Wilhelm Busch’s children’s story. Driven by “private ambition”, Rosen shared with the Kaiser the “specialty of running the state-wagon into the ditch”. Rich, Fisher, and Frauendienst, *Holstein 1897–1909*; Edward Grey to Francis Bertie, 22 August 1907, 53/33 II (D15), R/15/1/507, BL IOR; Harris, “Charges Against the German Minister”; Urlaubsnotiz, 29 May 1907, 6946, Personalakten 12576, PA AA.

Schultze. Stimmt. Det scheint mir ein Symbol zu sin. Wat der Luftballon is, der hat ville Ähnlichkeiten mit'n Sultan von Marokko.
 Müller. Er bläht sich uf un tut sich dicke.
 Schultze. Un wird doch an die Strippe gehalten.
 Müller. Un wenn er seine Arbeet jetan hat, wird er ausjepumpt und injepackt.
 Schultze. Ja, det Pumpen is bei beiden die Hauptsache.²²⁹

Rosen did return, staying on as envoy for another three years, scheming on behalf of the Auswärtiges Amt and German business interests or on his own initiative against the French, and with changing Moroccan constellations. With his health impaired and after the death of his son Oscar in September 1907, Rosen drifted into melancholia, writing to his friend Andreas that his life had become “dedicated to a politics, that appears to aim at failure”.²³⁰ Shortly before Rosen was posted to Bucharest in 1910, the Krupp representative in Morocco noted that the “resigned Rosen lets everything happen.”²³¹

The accreditation journey to Fez, his negotiations there, and the aftermath in the winter of 1906/7 showed that Rosen was not in his element. He worked methodically for German interests in Morocco, but he had an open flank that would come to hurt him, and Moroccan and German interests in the process. Rosen knew very little about Morocco or the Maghreb more generally, nor had he developed any major interest in the country, its culture, history or politics previously. However, by virtue of Orient being Orient in Germany he was expected to perform there politically, with his supposedly superior knowledge opening doors. From Berlin he received little further support. In marked contrast to a number of previous postings, he was initially well-liked in the German community as a “loyal council and helper”.²³² Rosen was tied into numerous micro-interests

229 “Schultze. You know Rosen? Müller. Why, how can I not know roses. Schultze. I don’t mean the flower, but the envoy in Morocco. Müller. Oh! Know him as well. He was with the Sultan and gave him a steerable balloon. Schultze. Right. Seems to be a symbol. What the balloon is, it has many similarities with the Sultan of Morocco. Müller. He bloats himself up and brags about. Schultze. And is still kept on a tight rope. Müller. And when he has done his work he is pumped out and stacked away. Schultze. Yes, pumping is with both the most important.” Newspaper Clipping, 1906–1907, ASWPC.

230 Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 6 May 1907, 1248, Personalakten 12576, PA AA; Heinrich von Tschirschky to Wilhelm II, 6 September 1907, 2448, Personalakten 12576, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 25 May 1909, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG.

231 Müller-Werth, *Ein staatsmännisch denkender Diplomat*, 27.

232 On the other side of the conflict over the Mannesmann affair in 1909 and tinged by anti-Semitic sentiments, Vassel developed a hatred for Rosen, calling him “an aesthete and phraseur, who saw himself as a rose blossom of world history”. Schabinger recorded further conflicts between Rosen and the Morocco-Germans. Karow, *In marokkanischen Diensten*, 126; Schabinger

in Morocco, with even more interests to be served in Germany, and he came to rely vastly on the German community for information and input. Visibly on the other side of the aisle from England, Rosen could not approach his usual go-to point for orientation or supplementary information. This was a complete change from his previous ways of international cooperation. As any expression of solidarity with the criminal, uncivilised, fanatic, Muslim, Berber, Moors was frowned upon and watched with eagle eyes, establishing working relationships or trustworthy channels of information with his Moroccan counterparts was difficult. Rosen did so still, even if he saw the country and the Sharifian empire nearing its end.

Some of his overtures were schemes against the French – what he called “rear-guard battles”. In other instances, Rosen expressed sympathies for the Moroccans that went beyond simple intrigue against France. In advocating for the recognition of Raisuli, he argued that the man was like Sultan ‘Abd al-‘Aziz a Sharif, a descendant of Idris I (eighth century) and by extension of the prophet Mohammed and thus could claim religious legitimacy for his governance.²³³ When ‘Abd al-‘Aziz started losing power and the initially French-supported brother of ‘Abd al-‘Aziz Mulay Hafid started occupying vast territories of the country, Rosen suggested that the European refusal to recognise Mulay Hafid’s sovereignty was in the Moroccan context invalid, as he was already de jure Sultan according to Moroccan law: “formal recognition through foreign powers would be a novum. Customary notification has taken place.”²³⁴ In working out the legal codifications coming out of Algeciras, Rosen pressed on the diplomatic council to not merely impose European legal concepts but to be mindful of “Muslim conceptions”.²³⁵ How far the codification of Moroccan law became in any way more culturally fitting due to Rosen’s interventions cannot be judged here, but as in other instances, arguing internationally on the basis of Islamic law and Moroccan heritage or wanting to dispel fearful overreaction by demonstrations of normalcy was likely not fruitful.

von Schowingen and Schabinger von Schowingen, *Mosaiksplitter*, 46; Vassel, *Berlinische und marokkanische Erlebnisse*, 87.

233 Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 301; Stephen Cory, “Breaking the Khaldunian Cycle? The Rise of Sharifianism as the Basis for Political Legitimacy in Early Modern Morocco,” *North African Studies* 13, no. 3 (September 2008): 377–94.

234 Albrecht Mendelssohn Bartholdy and Friedrich Thimme, eds., *Die Auswärtige Politik des Deutschen Reiches. 1871–1914* (Berlin: Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft für Politik und Geschichte, 1928), 151; Edmund Burke III, *Prelude to Protectorate in Morocco: Precolonial Protest and Resistance, 1860–1912* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1976), 131.

235 Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 6 May 1907, 1248, Personalakten 12576, PA AA.

Some German business and colonialist interests benefitted from the range of Rosen's actions, but for the German standing in the European diplomatic system his and the Auswärtiges Amt's Morocco policy was harmful, leading to constant squabbles with France and Britain without having formulated any clear objectives in Morocco, but to be obstinate. Bülow's assertion that Morocco could not be given up as this would endanger Germany's position in the Muslim world was the flip-side of the outrage Rosen encountered for his Muslim-friendly policies amid overrated calls for holy war in Morocco.²³⁶ In a widely spread war-time article by the long-standing *Times* correspondent Walter Harris, it read:

The muddiest period of German intrigue was during the years that Dr. Rosen, that astute Orientalist, represented Germany at Tangier... there was no intrigue to which the German Minister did not stoop, no misrepresentation that he was not prepared to make by which he could injure the cause of France and lead the natives to believe that an imminent and successful German intervention was at hand. Dr. Rosen's failure in Morocco was owing to the fact that he intrigued too much. He played the native game less ably than the native himself, and this lost their confidence. The strain of Oriental blood which flowed in his veins prevented his stopping short of notions which the natives would have approved of in their own people, but despised in a European... The Moors regarded Dr. Rosen as one of themselves.²³⁷

This sort of crossing of boundaries and identification with the other was not tolerated in this particular hegemonic power constellation of the early twentieth century. Successful conquest depended on cultural distance, civilisation superiority and a discourse of asymmetrical difference. Knowledge of "the Orient" or an appreciation of difference did not matter and too close of an association had adverse outcomes.

236 Bernhard von Bülow, *Imperial Germany*, trans. Marie A. Lewenz (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1915), 100.

237 Rosen's supposed "Oriental blood" was in reference to Rosen's Jewish grandfather Ignaz Moscheles. Vassel wrote in his memoirs that an anti-Semitic leaflet defaming Rosen was circulated by "old German nobility" in Morocco and Berlin in the summer of 1906. Walter B. Harris, "German Intrigues in Morocco. The French Zone. Dupers and Duped," *Times*, 27 December 1915, 34; "German Plots That Failed," *Times of India*, 1 February 1916, 6; John Fisher, "'An Eagle Whose Wings Are not Always Easy to Clip': Walter Burton Harris," in *On the Fringes of Diplomacy: Influences on British Foreign Policy, 1800–1945*, John Fisher and Antony Best (London: Routledge, 2011), 155–78; Vassel, *Berlinische und marokkanische Erlebnisse*, 89; Klaus Vassel, *Philipp Vassel. Generalkonsul (1911–1951)* (Aachen: Wilhelm Metz, 1977), 9.

5 Rosen at the Seam. Openings, Overestimations and Limits of Knowledge in Imperial Politics

The three sets of political encounters that involved Rosen as a German political agent and cultural intermediary were characteristic for the shift in German foreign policy from a passive approach to an ever more assertive and confrontational Weltpolitik. Elements of Bismarckian balancing and Humboldtian universalist scholarship continued to play a role. The latter benefitted from newfound German proactiveness, while the former showed itself to be unsuitable as an approach to extra-European affairs, contradictory to German businesses entering the international capitalist system and gung-ho German colonialism seeking its national dream abroad.

The sets of negotiations with the three “Oriental” rulers Mozaffar ed-Din Shah, Negus Negesti Menelik II and Sultan ‘Abd al-‘Aziz IV were conditioned by this development of German foreign affairs, as they were by the standing of the German negotiator Friedrich Rosen in each instance. In 1902 Rosen was a still largely insignificant, but up-and-coming official, requested personally by the Iranian side. In 1905 Rosen had gained stature in the German capital and at the court of Wilhelm II, but was still publicly largely unknown. His appointment to travel to the politically insignificant Ethiopia was also not an expression of appreciation or arising out of concrete knowledge about the Horn of Africa, but a pragmatic move, possibly intended to remove the recalcitrant man from Berlin. By 1906 Rosen had reached the spotlight of press attention, after having been appointed to Tangier in the midst of the Morocco crisis and having ruffled French feathers in the preparatory negotiations for Algeciras in Paris in the summer of 1905. The person and the name Rosen became associated with Germany’s Weltpolitik policy.

The conditions and ambitions on the sides of Iran, Ethiopia and Morocco were in some regards comparable. They were all extra-European countries struggling with the European world order and imperialist expansion on its borders. The key difference was Ethiopia’s real independence and its growing power as a nationalist-modernist empire, while the regimes in Iran and Morocco were rapidly losing room for manoeuvre, with every action leading to more debilitating consequences amid European imperial penetration. The German state knew that its attractiveness abroad was next to its scientific progress its military might. Outwardly, the Gardes du Corps represented this German military might, but as Krupp’s fingerprints were noticeable in all three sets of negotiations one is re-

minded that 80 % of Krupp's armaments were sold outside Germany.²³⁸ Germany appeared for all three countries as a potential European partner, who would not threaten but rather bolster territorial integrity. Moreover, Germany was an attractive model to emulate. This was a connected world. People in Morocco, Iran and Ethiopia knew that German lands were also conquered in the past and had been unified through diplomacy and military means by Bismarck and then emerged as a powerful state on the world stage. The appeals of these "Oriental" countries to Germany were then also underpinned with the argument that surely the Germans could understand their plight.

These conditions formed the framework of these negotiation situations. The Shah's visit to Potsdam and Berlin in 1902 came as an attempt to interest Germany in Iranian affairs and prop up the Shah's regime, as its independence was already heavily impaired. The German government was well-aware of Iran's situation and wanted little from the country. A friendly business environment would be enough, as all other involvement or commitment were due to alienate England and Russia. Consequently, substantial negotiations were blocked from the outset and did not come about despite repeated Iranian propositions. The Sondergesandtschaft to Ethiopia in early 1905 signified a low-level shift of German foreign policy, following the impetus of *Alldeutsche* and business lobbying after years of unrequited Ethiopian overtures. Rosen's mission was in a way a masterpiece of Germany's non-interventionist internationalisation strategy with free trade at its centre, aimed at mutually beneficial economic development and cultural collaboration. Constrained by surrounding European interests, Ethiopia's surge in power was crucial to enabling this collaboration, and the negotiations with Germany resulted in the consolidation of Menelik's power. In Fez the diametrically opposite was the case: the Moroccan sultan desperately needed Germany for survival, while Germany's foreign policy of international economic expansion, placating of nationalists and general indecisiveness amid bureaucratic and court infighting motivated repeating initiatives in Morocco that were less aimed at the reinvigoration of the Sharifian empire – despite all *Alldeutsche* bravado over the supposed strengthening of Morocco through the injection of "Deutschtum" (Germanness)²³⁹ – but rather hovered between pursuing German business and colonial interests and preventing France from completing its take-over. The results of the negotiations were as far-reaching as they were short-lived, as the Morocco-German rapprochement did not strengthen either side and served the already preponderant French power as ammunition for at-

²³⁸ Petersson, "Das Kaiserreich in Prozessen ökonomischer Globalisierung," 60–61.

²³⁹ "Parteien und Parteiführer in Marokko."

tacking both Morocco and Germany and mobilising French nationalist fervour. For German foreign policy, a continued low-level alignment with Raisuli may have been more effective and from an anti-imperial angle for the interests of Morocco as a whole likely more beneficial, but German business and colonial interests were served more by collaborating with 'Abd al-'Aziz, even if none of these ventures were sustainable.

The political, cultural and Orientalist knowledge bundled in Friedrich Rosen had everything and nothing to do with these three sets of diplomatic encounters. During the visit of Mozaffar ed-Din and Amin as-Sultan to Germany, Rosen could draw in full on his knowledge tool-box. Conversant in language and social codes, aware of political conditions and landscapes in Iran, even on good terms with the key actors, Rosen was hemmed in by having to prove his loyalty and mettle with only a year in on the job as Orient councillor at the *Auswärtiges Amt*. Rosen's concern over the pious Muslim Mozaffar ed-Din taking offense by talk of excavations of cultures from the jahili period may have been an outgrowth of Rosen's captivation with Iran's Islamic heritage or a falsely pleaded concern to keep Germany out of becoming bogged down in Iran. In either case it cost the Iranian delegation the chance to interest Wilhelm personally, despite it being questionable if the Kaiser's interest in excavations would have completely reversed all other considerations that advised restraint. After the initial snub of accommodating the Shah in the Orangerie had been skilfully interpreted by Rosen into charming both sides, the visit was generally seen as successful – for the Germans as they reached their economic goals and the company of the Shah was not too awkward, and for the Iranians in comparison to the rebuke by the British a few weeks later and the recognition extended from one royal house to another. Able to present himself as a skilful mediator of German and Iranian, or German and Oriental politics, the primary beneficiary of the three days in 1902 was Rosen's career.

Despite Rosen's near complete lack of previous engagement with anyone or anything Ethiopian, the first months of 1905 saw him at peak performance. Using his Arabic skills, bringing and keeping together a diverse delegation, Rosen was aware of his lack of understanding and keen on learning, a spirit central to the mission. At Addis Ababa, far removed from German key interests and with little German colonialist activity, Rosen managed to defuse and isolate the irascible Holtz, working within the limits of the diplomatically achievable and showcasing his Orientalist knowledge by orchestrating an archaeological mission of benefit to the Ethiopian ruler's crafting of national legitimacy and German scholars.

As the political goals he pursued for the German government became more ambitious in the aftermath of the Morocco crisis, Rosen's actions in Morocco in the fall of 1906 came under global scrutiny. Matters of knowledge were less im-

portant, even as he had again been appointed with the express purpose of having an Orient specialist in Tangier. Learning of his appointment several weeks after the fact through the press in far-away Ethiopia allows for speculating of whether he was not honourably removed from Berlin, rather than posted to Tangier as the best authority in Moroccan affairs. His prior exposure to Morocco was minimal, even as his interest in Sharifian history, culture and sciences was genuine. The fearlessness he put on display was not courageous or reckless, but more firmly rooted in fact than most of the sensationalist press reports at the time. Rosen lacked reliable and powerful partners among Moroccans and Europeans, overestimating what he could do with the help of German colonialist circles and operating in an environment in which make-believe and campaigns were more significant than more profound forms of knowledge and understanding. This was also due to Moroccan culture and Islamic civilisation being devalued in the dominant press and diplomatic discourse. The negotiations in Morocco were buttressed by a German pronouncement of friendliness to Islam, embodied by the Arabic-speaking German envoy, and symbolically reciprocated by the Moroccan sultan with the gift of the green saddle for the German rescuers. Despite this symbolism, the negotiations had little to do with knowledge but with a concrete power situation, in which the Moroccans were entirely reliant on the Germans. Rosen's observations of the stagnation of Morocco's Islamic civilisation as well as European penetration causing the decline of the country and its culture went largely ignored in Berlin, resulting in no real learning effect either. The sight of his closeness to Muslim Moroccans did, however, serve European actors as a smokescreen for undermining the German envoy in Morocco and Germany internationally. The combination of Islamophobia and antisemitism into Orient-hatred, as was levelled against the person of Rosen, speaks volumes about how the willingness to learn and engage with the foreign could also be turned on its head and used in the service of politics geared towards domination rather than collaboration.

All three instances showed that the application of knowledge in the form put forth by the SOS could play a significant role, particularly when power relations were not antagonistic or constrained by external factors. Equally, knowledge could be applied for manipulation, its non-application could shut down policy-options and outcomes of negotiations could be reinterpreted by outside forces to the extent that hard-won agreements became undone or irrelevant. In such situations too much understanding could push a diplomat into a corner of over-sympathising with the other, or being perceived as such, which could result in the othering of the diplomat himself.

On a personal level, observing the decline of the once proud cradle of Islamic learning at Fez strengthened Rosen's belief in the inevitability of the decline of

the Muslim world. This conception also framed the way the prominent Orient expert of the German foreign policy apparatus conceived of Germany's place and possibilities in international affairs. The experience of his Fez achievements leading to policy failure, fighting on lost position without backing from Berlin and his sense of isolation in Tangier would in the following years reinforce Rosen's scepticism towards the ability of the *Auswärtiges Amt* to navigate in world affairs. Leaving Morocco in 1910 also marked Rosen's departure from Orient politics. In his following posts in Romania, Portugal and the Netherlands his Orient expertise no longer played a prominent role.

Chapter 5

The International Orientalist Congresses in Hamburg in 1902 and Copenhagen in 1908. Celebrations and Agendas of Politics and Scholarship

1 Introduction

In 1902 and 1908 Friedrich Rosen headed the official German delegations to the week-long International Orientalist Congresses taking place in Hamburg and Copenhagen. In the pre-WWI period these congresses were the central venue of Orientalist congregation and included significant political participation. This chapter charts out these two congresses in the context of their local organisation, the themes of scholarship and the composition of participants. Rosen's engagements and actions as a political representative and as a scholar are situated before the background of the role these congresses played for organisers and predominantly European governments, and what academic and other scholarly participants sought to achieve by participating and presenting at these international assemblies. Each congress is embedded in a specific *genius loci*, with the motivations and preparations of the conveners presented. This is complemented by an overview of the demographics of participants, and a sketch of the thematic sections into which the congresses were divided. The sections that were of relevance to Rosen are discussed in more detail.

A focus is placed on how scholars used the platform of the congress to interest other scholars in their research and garner endorsements from the academic community for their projects. This support could be leveraged to harness political and financial support from governments and connected institutions. To demonstrate the agenda-setting platform the congresses offered, the presentations on the Central Asian explorations at the turn of the century are discussed, which were in the form of the German Turfan picture show, the main attraction at the 1908 congress. Less prominent but equally telling to the approval mechanism of the congresses, the 1902 participation of Rosen's friend Friedrich Carl Andreas and his talk on the non-Aryan background of Cyrus is discussed as an instance of the intertwining of political backing and academic career-seeking that took place in these fora. There were other instances of academic lobbying with governments, often connected with encyclopaedia or dictionary projects,

for which scholars sought funding – due to national conflicts or mere lack of political interest with mixed results.

Rosen took an interest in many of these endeavours and lent his active support to some. This was part of the task he was supposed to fulfil, allowing him to report back to the *Auswärtiges Amt* and the Kaiser on relevant political matters. The main purpose, however, was for governmental representatives like Rosen to personify their national government in its support of the search for Orientalist knowledge and to bask in the prestige accruing from such Orientalist knowledge production. Scholarship of the East was for many European governments a matter of pride, not least for the Germans since Kaiser Wilhelm II had travelled the Ottoman Empire in 1898 and took a profound – often philanthropic – interest in excavations of ancient civilisations. Orientalist scholarship was also a way for European governments to present themselves in a positive, politically non-confrontational light by association with their scholars. Particularly during the congress at Copenhagen Rosen exemplified this coming together of scholarship and political representation in giving a talk – to considerable effect – on his studies of the world view of the eleventh century Persian philosopher Omar Khayyam.

Both congresses were not as harmonious as the manicured proceeding publications suggest. As Fuchs and Rabault-F Feuerhahn show, the Orientalist congresses were beset and sustained by political competition and confrontations from the first congress in Paris in 1873, where “the savants of Germany, in consequence of the recent war, were, however willing, yet prevented by the French national feeling from making their appearance”. The participation of the German Orientalists promised to make the second congress in London in 1874 “one of the most striking events of the autumn” as the British journal *Nature* reported.¹ Nationalist conceptions and governmental rationales were also at play in designating French as the official language of communication at the congresses, in deciding on hosting countries, and the size of national delegations. “A French scientific creation”, Germany was initially opposed as a centre for congregation by French scholars and officials alike. Berlin was eventually chosen as host of the sixth congress in 1881. German officials exploited the notion that science was neutral, but celebrated national success when Orientalist lectures were held in German, as Rabault-F Feuerhahn shows.

Fuchs and Rabault-F Feuerhahn provide long-arching overviews of the institution of the International Orientalists Congresses from Paris in 1873 to Athens in 1912. Fuchs does so in the context of scholarly congresses as a function and venue of the internationalisation of scholarship in the nineteenth century,

1 “The International Congress of Orientalists,” *Nature* 10 (10 September 1874): 375–76.

amid the material shortcoming of these congresses never being global, but merely international in a North American-European geography. Rabault-Ferhahn investigates “interculturality” in scientific and cultural exchanges at the congresses. The normative expectation of universality in the term “interculturality” she sees unfulfilled, due to rivalries and conflicts between the different national delegations and political actors on the one hand, and in line of their Euro-centric geography and de facto exclusion of significant participation of scholars from India, Iran or Egypt. The congresses during the first decade of the twentieth century are only covered in passing and neither of the analyses delve in detail into the congress proceedings. In reading together sixteen congresses in fourteen cities and eleven countries over a period of forty years, these wide approaches run the danger of creating a temporal-institutional continuum, unaffected by circumstances specific to each congress and missing significant details, such as the increasing participation of scholars from “Oriental” countries in the last years before the war, that Ryad has observed.²

In the general literature on Orientalism these congresses are largely ignored as sites of significant scholarly and political exchange. Exogenous and endogenous conflicts – national, thematic, religious and professional – affected and rattled these gatherings, but even as clashes, animosities and rivalries flared up and endured, the congresses satisfied the need of scholars to socialise among their kin, learn, establish working relationships and gain recognition. The Indologist-philosopher Paul Deussen explained his regular participation in the congresses as follows:

Ich habe meine Gründe sie zu schätzen. Dort werden wichtige wissenschaftliche Unternehmungen angeregt und in die Wege geleitet, dort hat man Gelegenheit, seine neuesten Arbeiten sogleich dem Kreise, für den sie bestimmt sind, bekanntzugeben, und wenn auch die gehaltenen Vorträge nicht alle auf gleicher Höhe stehen, so ist nichts wertvoller als die persönliche und freundschaftliche Berührung mit den Fachgenossen, welche der in den Schriften unvermeidlichen Polemik ihre Schärfe benimmt, so daß im Lager der Orientalisten, wenigstens in dem der Sanskritisten, ein Ton herrscht, an dem sich andere wissenschaftliche Kreise wohl ein Beispiel nehmen können.³

² Fuchs, “The Politics of the Republic of Learning,” 216; Rabault-Ferhahn, “Congrès des orientalistes,” 62; Ryad, “Aḥmad Zākī Pasha,” 131.

³ “I have my reasons to appreciate them. Important scholarly enterprises are stirred and brought on their way there, and there you have the opportunity to directly present your newest work to the intended circle, and even if some of the delivered speeches are not all on the same height, there is nothing more valuable than the personal and friendly coming in touch with the companions of our discipline, which takes the edge of the in writing inevitable polemic, so much so that the atmosphere in the camp of the Orientalists, at least among the Sanskritists, is some-

Assigning legitimacy to scholarship and international lobbying for financial support was just as important. If governments were to support research, national competition was a good incentive, but joint Orientalist research projects could also showcase international cooperation. The congresses at Hamburg and Copenhagen exemplified these dynamics and the German government representative and Orientalist Rosen was one of the many actors pursuing their goals and ambitions at these formative congresses between politics and philological scholarship.

2 The Merchant City Hamburg Hosts the Thirteenth International Orientalist Congress in 1902

“Long live the Orientalists. Hooray, Hooray, Hooray!” shouted the sailing-crew of a four-master of the shipping company Siemers, when passing a steamship of the Hamburg-Amerika-Linie on the River Elbe. The ship of the Hamburg-Amerika-Linie was packed with two hundred participants of the thirteenth International Orientalist Congress.⁴ Fully flagged government buildings and mansions on the banks of the Elbe and fireworks illuminating the skies, the welcome celebrations were not spontaneous, but orchestrated by a coalition of Hamburg burghers, members of the Hamburg Senate, business magnates and proponents of the establishment of a university in Hamburg. These men of “practical professions”, as the president of the congress Georg Behrmann called the members of the organisational committee, utilised the congregation of hundreds of Orientalists from all over the world in Hamburg as part of a long-winded campaign for the establishment of a university.

Hamburg had been a commercial town with trade and political ties to the Americas, East Africa and East Asia for decades, as first Mayor Johann Georg Mönckeberg proudly declared in his speech addressing the first plenary session of the Orientalist Congress in 1902.⁵ The Eastern Mediterranean, a primary attraction to many Orientalists, had only become accessible to Hamburg’s merchants

thing other scholarly circles can take as an example.” Paul Deussen, *Mein Leben* (Berlin: Hofenberg, 2017), 243.

4 “Der XIII. Internationale Orientalisten Kongress in Hamburg,” *Hamburgischer Correspondent* 414 (4 September 1902).

5 *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 410; Joachim Oesterheld, “Germans in India between Kaiserreich and the End of World War II,” in *Transcultural Encounters between Germany and India. Kindred Spirits in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Joanne Miyang Cho, Eric Kurlander, and Douglas T. McGetchin (London: Routledge, 2014), 101–14.

after the North African shore was cleansed of piracy in the middle of the nineteenth century. In the last decades of the nineteenth century, the shipping company Levante-Linie drastically increased its travel and trade network in the Mediterranean, a development mirrored by the Hamburg-Amerika-Linies expansion via the Suez Canal into the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf to connect with the anticipated Bagdadbahn (Baghdad railway) in Basra.⁶ At the turn of the century, Hamburg's shipping was increasing exponentially across the board. Transportation of goods and people shifted from railway travel crossing the European continent to sea travel as the invention of the steam machine made shipping more affordable. The cost of traversing the 13,000 km distance from Hamburg to the Persian Gulf was nearly half the price of the 4,000 km distance on land. As the Hamburg harbour rationalised and became integrated into the German railway system after German unification, transportation from Hungary to Constantinople was no longer most cost-efficient via land or via the Austrian harbour at Trieste but became cheapest via Hamburg. Tonnage exported from Hamburg to Mediterranean and Black Sea harbours increased forty-fold between 1846 and 1901, while imports increased by a factor of 120.⁷ In the 1890s, increasing numbers of tourists also travelled by ship. They visited Greece, the Ottoman Empire and Egypt to see the wonders of antiquity, the Bible, and the Pharos. Albert Ballin's Hamburg-Amerika-Linie had started offering luxury sea travel on its flagships as early as 1891. Offering more affordable journeys than Ballin's liners, Hamburg's Levante-Linie proudly announced that after the Kaiser journey to the Ottoman Empire, it had dedicated three steamships, offering space for fifty to one hundred German tourists, that toured the Mediterranean every twenty days. A voyage from Hamburg to Constantinople, with all amenities and comforts, cost 275 Mark and offered "rich profits for body and spirit."⁸

6 Senior G. Behrmann, Friedrich Christian Sieveking and Albrecht O'Swald, An die Anwohner, 2 September 1902, 9, 111–1 Cl. VII Lit. Rf Nr. 29 Vol. 55 Fasc. 2, StAH; Deutsche Levante-Linie to Hamburg Senate, 3 September 1902, 3, 111–1 Cl. VII Lit. Rf Nr. 29 Vol. 55 Fasc. 5, StAH; J. Krauss, *Hamburgs Rhederei und die Levante im 19. Jahrhundert. Dem XIII. Internationalen Orientalisten-Kongress. Die deutsche Levante-Linie in Hamburg* (Hamburg: Verlagsanstalt u. Druckerei A.-G., 1902); Brodacki, "Hamburg und der Persische Golf," 42–60.

7 Henry Cord Meyer, *Mitteleuropa: In German Thought and Action 1815–1945* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1955), 78–79.

8 Krauss, *Hamburgs Rhederei und die Levante*, 68–75; Ulrich Moennig, "Ossendampers, Tabakhändler und 'Bolschewiken' – die deutsche Levante-Linie und die hamburgische Definition des Orients," in *Osmanen in Hamburg – eine Beziehungsgeschichte zur Zeit des Ersten Weltkrieges*, Yavuz Köse (Hamburg: Hamburg University Press, 2016), 118.

Ferguson noted that historians “have tended to discount Hamburg as a stronghold of Bildungsbürgertum” due to its reputation of “philistinism and materialism”, exemplified by Heinrich Heine escaping the “disgusting merchant’s nest”.⁹ But as the city grew rich, the pursuit of wealth was no longer sufficient for the self-conception of many burghers. The saying in reference to the American sugar trade that only those “too dumb for sugar” pursued academia gave way to the belief that a higher purpose of existence was found in scholarship and the formation of the spirit, while others supported vocational schools for more utilitarian purposes.¹⁰ Free cities like Hamburg had long been excluded from founding their own universities as the prerogative of establishing such institutions of higher learning had been that of kings and the pope. But by 1846 the Hamburg syndicus (state secretary), diplomat and patron of scholarship Karl Sieveking professed that “only the independence of those states is justified, which grant a sanctuary for the nobler goods of humanity” and that commercial city with interests in places as far as Brazil, the Maghreb, China and the Chatham Islands should have a “cosmopolitan university”. The majority of the Hamburg commercial bourgeoisie, who saw their power in the city threatened by professors with richly endowed chairs, pushed back and Sieveking’s vision came to naught.¹¹ But Hamburg had not been a city without sciences and scholarship in the nineteenth century, as Nicolaysen described. The Johanneum Gymnasium, founded in 1529, was where the sons of the city were prepared for university studies elsewhere, and many of its teachers engaged in scholarship on the side. Applied science was also well-regarded and a number of scientific institutes had been founded throughout the nineteenth century, such as the botanical garden in 1821, the chemical lab in 1878, the physical lab in 1885 and the institute of nautical and tropical maladies in 1900.¹²

In the 1890s and 1900s the exertions of the senator Werner von Melle brought about a significant increase in scientific lectures and a “rapid expansion

9 Niall Ferguson, *Paper and Iron. Hamburg Business and German Politics in the Era of Inflation, 1897–1927* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 61.

10 Eckart Krause, Personal communication, 5 October 2016; Ferguson, *Paper and Iron*, 63.

11 Wilhelm Sillem, “Sieveking, Karl,” *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 34 (1892): 227–31; Georg Behrmann, *Hamburgs Orientalisten. Dem XIII. internationalen Orientalisten-Kongress überreicht von der Aaverhoff-Stiftung* (Hamburg: H. O. Persiehl, 1902), 8–9; Rainer Nicolaysen, “Wandlungsprozesse der Hamburger Universität im 20. Jahrhundert” (2010). <https://www.uni-hamburg.de/einrichtungen/weitere-einrichtungen/arbeitsstelle-fuer-universitaetsgeschichte/geschichte.html>.

12 Wolfgang U. Eckart, “From Questionnaires to Microscopes: Founding and Early Years of the Hamburg Institute of Nautical and Tropical Diseases,” in *Science Across the European Empires, 1800–1950*, Benedikt Stuchtey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 309–27; Nicolaysen, “Wandlungsprozesse der Hamburger Universität,” 11.

of the system of formal education” in Hamburg.¹³ In the winter semester before the Orientalist congress in 1902, some 72,000 students attended 132 courses offered by 108 lecturers on topics as diverse as tropical medicine, philosophy from Kant to Nietzsche, theology, German history, romance literature, and Japanese, Greek, Persian and Turkish textiles and pottery.¹⁴ Melle devoted his life to the foundation of a university in Hamburg, systematised and unified lecture calendars across the city and invited professors from the universities of Berlin, Tübingen, Leipzig and Heidelberg to teach in Hamburg.¹⁵ An accomplice in lobbying for scholarship in Hamburg was pastor Georg Behrmann. Behrmann had learned Arabic at the Johanneum and studied theology and Oriental studies in Halle and Tübingen. After returning to Hamburg he continued studying Persian, Arabic and Turkish with a handful of friends and occasionally gave talks on Persian poetry.¹⁶ Behrmann helped Melle in engaging the Indologist Hermann Oldenberg and Assyrologist Julius Oppert to lecture in Hamburg in the 1890s. In retrospect, the lecture series of these well-known Orientalists were seen as the “prelude” for the Orientalist Congress in “promoting the intellectual life and reputation of Hamburg.”¹⁷

Behrmann, the senior pastor of the city and companion of Kaiser Wilhelm II on his journey to Jerusalem in 1898, and Melle consorted in the highest spheres of Hamburg society. Mayor Mönckeberg and overseas merchant cum senator William Henry O'Swald belonged to their circles, just as much as the Burchard family, the owner of the Hamburg-Amerika-Linie Albert Ballin and Ernst Friedrich Sieveking, lawyer, son-in-law of Mönckeberg and grand-nephew of the erstwhile university proponent Karl Sieveking. They would become the key members of an organising committee of sixty-six of the city's most distinguished personalities, who saw a gathering of scholars in the form of the International Orientalist Con-

13 Ferguson, *Paper and Iron*, 61.

14 “Die wissenschaftlichen Vorlesungen. Ostern 1902 bis Ostern 1903,” in *Jahrbuch der hamburgischen wissenschaftlichen Anstalten*. XX (Hamburg: Lütcke & Wulff, E.H. Senats Buchdruckern, 1903), 3; Werner von Melle, *Dreißig Jahre Hamburger Wissenschaft. 1891–1921. Rückblicke und persönliche Erinnerungen* (Hamburg: Broschek & Co, 1923), 306–7.

15 Nicolaysen, “Wandlungsprozesse der hamburgischen Universität im 20. Jahrhundert,” 13; “Die wissenschaftlichen Vorlesungen. 1902,” 3–4.

16 Georg (jr.) Behrmann, “Behrmann, Georg,” *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 2 (1955): 16; Carl-Heinrich Becker, “Behrmann und die Orientalistik,” in *Senior D. Georg Behrmann, seine Persönlichkeit und sein Wirken. Eindrücke und Erinnerungen gesammelt von seinen Freunden*. (Hamburg: Alfred Janssen, 1916), 274–75.

17 von Melle, *Dreißig Jahre Hamburger Wissenschaft. 1891–1921. Rückblicke und persönliche Erinnerungen*, 315–17.

gress a befitting event for the growing status of Hamburg.¹⁸ The knowledge the Orientalists would bring to Hamburg was potentially useful for trade, at least quaint enough for dinner conversation, and potentially enlightening as to the history and destiny of mankind between Orient and Occident. Most importantly, the Orientalist Congress should put Hamburg on the map of prime scholarship.

But why should a meeting of scholars interested in the antique Orient choose a port city without university or any academic pedigree to mention? The organisers were acutely aware of this shortcoming. Welcoming the Orientalists at the congress, Behrmann apologetically acknowledged: “You, that you are used to convene in university towns, find yourselves transposed here into a town of commerce... Hamburg presents itself as a *Stadt in Arbeit* (city in works/progress). That is the impression you receive everywhere. You see it in our streets; construction sites are everywhere.” Hamburg could not serve with the culture of Paris, the antiquity of Rome or the buzz of London. Yet, Hamburg was a wealthy city and wanted to bask in the Oriental glory of the visiting scholars in its drive for the establishment of a university. Behrmann rejoiced: “Have we still not today a cosmopolitan university – we have now after all an international congress of many grantees of rigorous scholarship.”¹⁹

2.1 Why Hamburg?

So why Hamburg? A recurring issue in the early twentieth century in holding the Orientalist congresses was finding an adequate host. Organising the congresses took time, and financial resources needed to be available to make these gatherings affordable and reputable enough for the most important luminaries to arrive. Some of the senior scholars had independent means, but many struggled to afford lengthy trips and accommodation in a foreign city.²⁰ Geographic location was equally important as predominantly European Orientalists wanted to safely reach congresses within a few days rather than a few weeks travel. Hosts were suggested at the end of the preceding sessions. In the twelfth to sixteenth sessions of the International Orientalist Congress at most two hosts were suggested, with one choice often being immediately out of the question. The invitation by the Japanese government to Tokyo in 1902 was rejected due to the dis-

18 “Tagesbericht,” *Hamburger Fremdenblatt* 194 (10 Juni 1901); Comité der Bürger Hamburgs, Erster Bericht, 18 March 1902, 1 – Anlage, 111–1 Cl. VII Lit. Rf Nr. 29 Vol. 55 Fasc. 2, StAH; *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 445–47; Ferguson, *Paper and Iron*, 67.

19 *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 407–9.

20 L. Hanisch, *Briefwechsel Goldziher und Hartmann*, 292, 296–98.

tance. Similarly, the offer of the municipality of Tiflis in 1905 was declined due to Georgia's remoteness and insufficient postal service. In the same year the last minute decision fell on Copenhagen, but only provisionally as the Danish government had not been consulted. In 1908 the Greek delegation arrived with an invitation to Athens to have the congress coincide with the seventy-fifth anniversary of the foundation of the National Greek University in Athens but government backing was unclear. That year the government of Bengal had also extended an invitation to Calcutta, but the long journeys were prohibitive. When it looked like the Athens congress was about to be cancelled due to political upheavals in the country, an invitation of the Egyptian government to Cairo on the occasion of the establishment of the Egyptian national university was considered for a while. Eventually the congress was simply pushed back by a year to 1912 and stayed in Athens. 1915 was supposed to take place in the European centre again at Oxford, where organisation and funding would be secured.²¹

Hamburg was decided on in Rome in 1899. The Hamburg senate had extended an invitation. At Rome the Hebraist, theologian and co-founder of the *Deutscher Verein zur Erforschung Palästinas* Emil Kautzsch and the Indologist and philologist Richard Pischel proposed on behalf of the *Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft*, the umbrella organisation of German Orient scholarship, that the responsibility for organising the next congress should be handed to a "committee of burghers of Hamburg".²² Although without a university, Hamburg was a sensible choice for European Orientalists. Its location on a well-developed railway system connected the north German city to Paris, Vienna, Budapest, the Low Countries and all German cities within a day's travel. With its port it could be reached by sea from Great Britain within hours, and from Scandinavia and St. Petersburg within a day. Only the Italians had a trip of two days or more – and obviously everybody, Oriental or not, from Calcutta, Cairo or the USA. There were plenty of universities nearby, who would support Hamburg, and the international Orientalists were reminded that this was a formal government backed invitation. Kautzsch made it sound in Rome as if Hamburg was a spontaneous idea of the German Orientalists there on the spot. He had sent a telegram to Behrmann,

²¹ *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 510; *Actes du XIV^e Congrès des orientalistes*, 70–71; *Actes du quinzième Congrès international des orientalistes. Session de Copenhague. 1908* (Copenhagen: Imprimerie Græbe, 1909), 82–83; Angelo de Gubernatis to Vilhelm Thomsen, 28 February 1910, 8 NKS 4291,4°, KB – HA; Spyridon Lambros to Vilhelm Thomsen, 12 January 1912, 13 NKS 4291,4°, KB – HA.

²² "The Twelfth International Congress of Orientalists. Rome, 1899," *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, January 1900, 186; *Comité der Bürger Hamburgs*, *Erster Bericht*, 18 March 1902, 1 – Anlage, 111–1 Cl. VII Lit. Rf Nr. 29 Vol. 55 Fasc. 2, StAH.

who wired back agreement of Hamburg's senate on the very next day. But Behrmann, an actor in the "quietness of the boards of trustees and commissions, when it was necessary to make means available for this or the other purpose" as Carl Heinrich Becker characterised him later, likely had in the context of the Kaiser journey in 1898 spoken with Kautzsch and Pischel and initiated the invitation.²³

The organising committee of politicians, merchants and lawyers around Behrmann intended to live up to the honour bestowed upon Hamburg. A preparatory meeting in the Hamburg townhall in June 1900 between the Orientalists Kautzsch and Pischel, mayor Mönckeberg, pastor Behrmann and the secretary of the committee Sieveking revolved around lessons to be learned from Rome. Italian national railways had cut the cost of all railway tickets by half for the week of the congress, which led to 1,200 attendants, many of them random visitors. The chaos that ensued should not be repeated in Hamburg. Kautzsch and Pischel suggested that the collaboration of Hamburg's learned men and businessmen in the organisation and conduct of the congress was essential to its success. Kautzsch brought up the idea of adding a section on "Colonialwaren" (colonial goods) to the usual array of cerebral topics of philology, theology and antique history, and give the congress a more practical appeal. Sieveking consulted Eduard Sachau of the SOS, who as the organiser of the congress in Berlin in 1881 knew how to utilise the communication systems of the German Foreign Ministry for inviting foreign scholars and officials. The geography and zoology congresses in Berlin in 1899 also shared their experiences, and Francesco Lorenzo Pullè of the organisational committee of Rome provided expenses tabulations.²⁴ The associate of the Kaiser Albert Ballin also signalled support early on. Some form of festivity would take place on a ship of the Hamburg-Amerika-Linie.²⁵ With Sieveking as secretary, the overseas merchant and Hamburg senator William O'Swald became treasurer of the organising committee and this inner circle of organisers was complemented by Johann Heinrich Burchard, Hamburg's senator tasked with foreign relations. This core committee was complemented by another sixty members: the consular corps based in Hamburg,

²³ *Actes du douzième Congrès international des orientalistes. Rome, 1899* (Florence: Société Typographique Florentine, 1901), CCLVIII–CCLX; Becker, "Behrmann und die Orientalistik," 276.

²⁴ Friedrich Christian Sieveking, *Gehorsames Gesuch to Hamburg Senate*, 21 February 1902, 8, 111–1 Cl. VII Lit. Rf Nr. 29 Vol. 55 Fasc. 1, StAH.

²⁵ Friedrich Christian Sieveking, *Protokoll Vorbesprechung*, 16 June 1900, 111–1 Cl. VII Lit. Rf Nr. 29 Vol. 55 Fasc. 6, StAH.

Hanseatic traders and businessmen, and Hamburg's intelligentsia.²⁶ Behrmann and consorts were sure that they had an extended network of Hamburg's political, economic and cultural elite at their disposal that could pull off this prestigious gathering of Orientalists.

2.2 Organising an Orientalist Congress

From Pullè's expenses overview O'Swald extrapolated a budget for Hamburg that would have to cover the opening reception in Hamburg's town hall, a festive performance in the city theatre, a gala diner for the scholars and governmental delegates, the publication of the transactions, the printing of informational reports, the production of gadgets and bureau overheads. The congresses were known among scholars for their "indulgences", as Martin Hartmann called them, and such often well-lubricated festivities were expected as a matter of course.²⁷ The halls for holding the academic portions of the congress did not require payment, as the city's Konzerthaus could be used for the plenary meetings without cost, and a neighbouring school was opened up for the sections. The cultural institutions of the city, such as the city library and the ethnological museum, equally opened their spaces to the scholars for free. An excursion by ship on the river Elbe to Cuxhaven was covered by Ballin and the final dinner at the Hagenbeck Zoological garden was on the house.

The Rome congress had cost 37,000 francs, which were in large parts covered by the Italian foreign and education ministries. Hamburg's organisational committee looked at a total cost between 28,500 for 500 participants and 34,000 Mark for 1,000 participants. 8,500 to 17,000 Mark were to be covered by contributions of participants at a fee of 20 Marks per person.²⁸ Local businessmen offered their services at no charge. Otto Persiehl printed all congress material that did not necessitate non-Latin typesets. More important still, Ballin's Hamburg-Amerika-Linie offered travel on board its ships from Great Britain and North America at significantly reduced prices. The Aeverhoff Stiftung, which had been

²⁶ *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 481–83; Friedrich Christian Sieveking to Gerhard Hachmann, 29 April 1902, 5, 111–1 Cl. VII Lit. Rf Nr. 29 Vol. 55 Fasc. 6, StAH; Ferguson, *Paper and Iron*, 83; Heinrich Reincke, "Burchard, Heinrich," *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 3 (1957): 31–32; Comité der Bürger Hamburgs, *Erster Bericht*, 18 March 1902, 1 – Anlage, 111–1 Cl. VII Lit. Rf Nr. 29 Vol. 55 Fasc. 2, StAH.

²⁷ L. Hanisch, *Briefwechsel Becker und Hartmann*, 45.

²⁸ Friedrich Christian Sieveking to Johann Georg Mönckeberg, 29 March 1902, 3, 111–1 Cl. VII Lit. Rf Nr. 29 Vol. 55 Fasc. 2, StAH.

supporting Hamburg's scholars for decades with travel bursaries and publication grants, funded the publication of Behrmann's extensive history of Orientalist scholarship in the city of Hamburg that dated back to the first arrival of Portuguese Jews to the city in the sixteenth century.²⁹ The Deutsche Levante-Linie had the Hamburg based economic historian Jakob Krauss gain access to its archival records and paid for him to write a history of Hamburg's shipping in the Orient as a feature of advertisement.³⁰

The Levante-Linie and the Averhoff Stiftung only decided to contribute in the summer of 1902, and the closing dinner at the Zoological garden was also only scheduled during the last weeks of preparations. Until the spring of 1902 the organisational committee spent 14,000 marks and a gap of 20,000 Marks yawned in the budget of O'Swald. Particularly the printing of the collected congress transactions, which necessitated printing machines that could produce texts in East Asian, Arabic and cuneiform scripts, was bound to be expensive.³¹ In January 1902 the organisational committee appealed for financial contributions in the *Hamburger Nachrichten*. The readers were informed that the organisers were "among the most distinguished burghers" of Hamburg and that the congress would bring the city of Hamburg practical benefits as "Colonial-Waren" would be discussed.³² But donations still did not foot the bill. Two months later Sieveking and Behrmann petitioned the senate of Hamburg to support the congress of this "increasingly important" discipline. The argument went that King Oscar of Sweden and Norway had attended the Stockholm congress, Archduke Rainer of Austria had participated in Vienna and all previous organisers had been supported by their governments, including those in equally bourgeois Geneva. A "worthy" event meant enough pomp, and that cost money. Another 20,000 Mark were requested. Conveniently, mayor Mönckeberg, who had the final say on the senate's finances, was also a member of the organising committee; the request was granted.³³

²⁹ Findbuch. Averhoff Stiftung, 10 611–19, StAH; Georg Behrmann, *Hamburgs Orientalisten*; Achim Rohde, "400 Jahre Orientalistik/Hebraistik in Hamburg – Vom akademischen Gymnasium zur Hamburger Universität," *Hamburger Beiträge zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte* 23 (2013): 195–212.

³⁰ Moennig, "Deutsche Levante-Linie"; Krauss, *Hamburgs Rhederei und die Levante*.

³¹ Senior G. Behrmann and Friedrich Christian Sieveking, Eingabe bei Senat, 18 March 1902, 1, 111–1 Cl. VII Lit. Rf Nr. 29 Vol. 55 Fasc. 2, StAH.

³² "Der XIII. internationale Orientalistenkongress," *Hamburger Nachrichten* 11 (14 January 1902): 2.

³³ Friedrich Christian Sieveking to Johann Georg Mönckeberg, 29 March 1902, 3, 111–1 Cl. VII Lit. Rf Nr. 29 Vol. 55 Fasc. 2, StAH.

The final structuring of the sections needed to be decided on. This depended in large parts on the attendance of enough prominent scholars from the different sub-disciplines to fill up the sections. The basic outline of the sections had been established relatively early and was by and large a continuation of previous congresses. As before there was going to be a section of comparative Indo-European languages, which could also come in the form of Aryan or Indo-Germanic languages, and could include sub-sections dealing with India and Iran, or the two lands would get their own sections. Other sections would discuss Semitic languages, Islam, Central, East and South-East Asia, Greece and Egyptology.³⁴ Scholars were invited accordingly. The organisational committee had been spreading the news of the congress as early as 1901, but a concerted effort was only made by February 1902, when Burchard was designated to send invitations to the German states and foreign governments.³⁵ Until then, only few scholars had confirmed their participation, and after checking back with previous organisers, the organising committee realised that it needed official backing for its invitations to government delegations before scholars would attend. "Such delegations are of that much more importance, as many extraordinary savants are only able to appear at the congress, if they are officially delegated," the senate was petitioned. Success depended on the attendance of renown savants, which would make the congress a "scholarly happening of no less significance than the ones before. For this, an extended participation of governments and governmental-scholarly institutions would create the most important preconditions."³⁶ Even though Hamburg still maintained a limited foreign relations apparatus from when it was an independent entity before German unification, using the communication channels of the German Reich would provide better political backing and increase the likelihood of other governments to support their scholars with travel bursaries.

³⁴ The sections varied from congress to congress. Greece did not always come to pass, Egyptology was sometimes added to Africa or African languages, or a focus was put on general archaeology or folkloristic studies. The St. Petersburg Congress in 1876 was entirely dissimilar and followed a scheme that expanded from within Russian Asia southwards and eastwards into non-Russian Asia. Algiers in 1905 had a section that dealt with North Africa. "The Twelfth International Congress of Orientalists," 181–83; *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, V–XIII; *Actes du quinzième Congrès des orientalistes*, 40–41; Rabault-Feuerhahn, "Congrès des orientalistes," 66–67.

³⁵ Johann Heinrich Burchard, Auszug aus dem Protokolle des Senats, 21 February 1902, 11, 111–1 Cl. VII Lit. Rf Nr. 29 Vol. 55 Fasc. 1, StAH.

³⁶ Comité des 12. Internationalen Orientalisten-Congress, Promemoria für Senat, 13 March 1902, 15, 111–1 Cl. VII Lit. Rf Nr. 29 Vol. 55 Fasc. 1, StAH.

By June, the first attendance confirmations of German scholars started trickling in via Berlin, followed by confirmations of official delegates from the Egypt, France, India, Japan, Denmark and Italy. These governmental delegations were of mixed academic backgrounds. The Russian delegate Irénée de Nauphal held a chair in Islamic law in St. Petersburg, Vilhelm Thomsen for Denmark was an eminent linguist in Copenhagen, and Messrs Pullé and de Gubernatis were Italy's main Indologists. But among the government delegates were also officials, such as the Hungarian member of parliament Johann Krsmárik, Ahmed Zeki Bey for Egypt, or Friedrich Rosen for Germany, who earned their living outside scholarship.³⁷ The more confirmations of important scholars and government delegations arrived, the more attractive the congress became. In intervals the organisational committee sent out reports to potential participants at universities, academies and governments that updated confirmations and the development of the programme.

The news of many "foreign savants" coming to the city had the widely read *Hamburgischer Correspondent* laud the organisers, contributing to the anticipation that was starting to grip the city.³⁸ While the publications of Behrmann, the Levante-Linie and the German-Japanese Friendship club – a collection of essays on Japanese topics covering law, history and psychology – came out just in time for the congress, the organisational committee also produced an attractive gadget for the congress members, that would look, in Agnes Smith Lewis' words, "so effective on the black coats of its members": a silver medal depicting a rabbinic sage with a flowing mane, studying a book before a background of antique columns.³⁹

Early criticism of Hamburg Rabbi Max Grunwald that the city was not suitable for holding an Orientalist congress, due to its lack of Orientalist expertise, was, however, given further fodder when a couple of weeks before the start of the congress the *Hamburger Nachrichten* reported that scandalous membership cards had been sent out to participants. The cards showed the Fatiha – the open-

37 Frantzius to Johann Heinrich Burchard, 27 June 1902, 44, 111–1 Cl. VII Lit. Rf Nr. 29 Vol. 55 Fasc. 1, StAH; Oswald von Richthofen to Johann Heinrich Burchard, 14 June 1902, 39, 111–1 Cl. VII Lit. Rf Nr. 29 Vol. 55 Fasc. 1, StAH; Lowndes Vicente, "Orientalism on the Margins," 16–17; Ryad, "Aḥmad Zākī Pasha," 135.

38 Auszug aus dem Protokolle des Senats, 16 June 1902, 111–1 Cl. VII Lit. Rf Nr. 29 Vol. 55 Fasc. 9, StAH; Max Grunwald, "Zum XIII. internationalen Orientalisten-Congress in Hamburg," *Hamburgische Zeitschriften* 120 (25 May 1924 1902); "Der internationale Orientalisten Kongress," *Hamburgischer Correspondent* 340 (23 July 1902).

39 Agnes Smith Lewis, "What I Saw at the Orientalist Congress," *The Expository Times* 14, no. 2 (1902): 94; Lutz Ruffert, *Medaillen Hamburg: 1549–2009. Katalog mit Preisen* (Regenstauf: Gietl, 2009), 151.



Fig. 5.1. Retracted membership card of the Orientalist Congress in Hamburg.

ing Surah of the Quran – on a red-blue-golden ornamentalised imitation of an Arabic manuscript page. Diagonally printed across the Fatiha in fat red letters were the dates of the congress “4–10. Sept. 1902.” “It would certainly provoke much criticism from us, if in a distant land, as a peculiarity of our Christian-European disposition, the Lord’s Prayer had been handed out”, the newspaper attacked the organisational committee sharply and lamented that the Egyptian press had picked up on the story and was heaping criticism on the Hamburg congress before it had even started. If only someone with “knowledge of the Orient had been consulted.” Hastily, the organisational committee had new plain membership cards printed, which only showed the crest of Hamburg, and the old ones were declared “provisional”.⁴⁰

Such embarrassments would not stop the congress. The organisational committee and senate of Hamburg – by now nearly the same entity – went all out. All public buildings of the city were ordered to flag for the duration of the congress. Private mansions along the Elbe should follow suit and illuminate the skies with fireworks. A military marching band was arranged, and also “ladies interested in the scholarship of the Orient, could obviously participate; their participation being downright desired”. On the morning of the opening of the congress, anxiety gave way to pride. With excitement the *Hamburgischer Correspondent* anticipated the arrival of the famous savants, who would enlighten the city of Hamburg with their Orientalist scholarship.⁴¹

2.3 Orientalists of All Shapes and Colours

Where were these Orientalists from and what can their composition tell us about the interplay of political relevance, scholarship and circumstance at these gatherings? According to the congress proceedings some seven hundred and forty-nine participants attended the thirteenth International Orientalist Congress.⁴² Structured into national lists of participation, a number of additional participants show up only as part of the lists of government representatives, as is

⁴⁰ “Der 13. internationale Orientalisten-Kongress,” *Hamburger Nachrichten* 200 (26 August 1902); XIII. Internat. Orientalisten Kongress. Hamburg Mitgliedskarte, 1902, Senator Scheumann, 111–1 Cl. VII Lit. Rf Nr. 29 Vol. 55 Fasc. 9, StAH.

⁴¹ “XIII. Internationale Orientalisten Kongress in Hamburg,” *Hamburgischer Correspondent* 415 (5 September 1902); “Alpha Beta,” *Hamburgischer Correspondent* 534 (13 November 1901); Comité des 12. Internationalen Orientalisten-Kongress to Senate, 5 September 1902, 9, 111–1 Cl. VII Lit. Rf Nr. 29 Vol. 55 Fasc. 2, StAH; “Der XIII. internationale Orientalisten Kongress in Hamburg.”

⁴² *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 458–79.

the case for Belgium, Turkey and Ceylon (Sri Lanka), or as representatives of academies and learned institutions. Further complicating are cases as that of Rosen's friend Enno Littmann, a German Semitist, who taught at Princeton and was thus listed under US participants, or the French archaeologist Emile Gaston Chassinat who was listed under Egypt, where his French archaeological institute was located. Armenians were counted under Armenia, Russia, and Persia. Czechs could appear for Austria or for Hungary, the Singalese Zilva Wickremasinghe, who was based at Oxford at the time, represented the government of Ceylon, but was listed as an Indian citizen. The British and London-based Charles Lyall represented the Indian government and also went as Indian. The representative of Siam was the librarian Oskar Frankfurter, who got a trip to his hometown out of the congress.

Learned institutions – research institutes, academies, universities, societies, libraries, colleges, faculties, schools, museums, or religious entities – often did not send their own representatives, but asked already confirmed participants to represent them. Next to his home university at Bologna, Pullé represented the university of Pisa, the Società Asiatica Italiana in Florence, the Italian committee of the India Exploration Fund and the Italian government. Often these institutions wanted to be associated with the congress and learn about what happened during the sessions, but had no one qualified to attend or not enough funds to sponsor a trip. In short, there were a number of overlaps in the participation lists. There are a few more issues with the participation numbers. Unlike earlier congresses Hamburg did not count who attended the congress and who did not show up despite having registered. Some scholars paid the membership fee, which was enough to be sent the publications of the proceedings, but did not make the trip. The only assured participants were the ones who held presentations or participated in discussions, next to the ones mentioned in newspaper reports and senate records. While there are some inconsistencies, the different sources coincide for the most part, and confirm an approximate number of above seven hundred congress participants.

By far not every participant was a scholar of the Orient. Next to political and diplomatic figures, there were businessmen, such as Ballin, O'Swald and Persiehl, and members of society, such as publishers, priests, rabbis, judges, doctors and teachers. Many of them came from Hamburg or around, but some travelled from Armenia, the Netherlands, France, Austria or Egypt. Many of these participants, who were ostensibly extraneous to the subtleties of philological analysis, theological exegesis or archaeological excavation, did not noticeably participate in the thematic sections of the congress, but stuck to the general assemblies and ceremonial events. Some one hundred and sixty-three participants were female. Agnes Smith-Lewis and her twin sister Margaret Dunlop Gibson, who had in 1892

Table 5.1. Number of Registered Participants per Country – Hamburg, 1902

| Country | Participants |
|--|--------------|
| Germany | 390 |
| Great Britain | 69 |
| France | 40 |
| United States | 32 |
| Austria | 30 |
| Italy | 29 |
| Russia | 28 |
| Netherlands | 20 |
| Switzerland | 17 |
| Denmark | 14 |
| Hungary | 14 |
| Japan | 11 |
| Sweden | 11 |
| India | 9 |
| Belgium | 8 |
| Egypt | 6 |
| Armenia, China, Greece, Mexico, Montenegro, Norway, Iran, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Siam, Spain, Turkey | 3 or less |

Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses, 458–79.

Table 5.2. Number of Representatives Delegated by Academic Institutions – Hamburg, 1902

| Country | Representatives |
|---|-----------------|
| Great Britain | 26 |
| Germany | 24 |
| United States | 18 |
| France | 12 |
| Russia | 9 |
| Austria | 8 |
| Italy | 6 |
| Hungary | 5 |
| Belgium, Egypt, India, Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland | 4 or less |

Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses, 451–58.

discovered the Sinaitic Palimpsest at Saint Catherine's Monastery, were not the only women attending who were in one way or another involved in the study of the Orient. The Russian translator, traveller and women's activist Olga Lebede-

va, for example, was another frequent panel fixture.⁴³ But most women, who were participants of the congress were wives of Orient scholars. The famed scholar of Islam, Ignaz Goldziher, arrived from Budapest with his wife Laura, just as the Orientalist Theodor Nöldeke came with his Frau Professor from Strasbourg. Discussion contributions by family members do not appear in the reports from the sections, and while some of the wives were certainly in one way or another involved in the Orientalist work of their husbands many were likely not heavily invested.⁴⁴ The majority of the women attending were from Hamburg and around, such as Ada Persiehl, the daughter of the publisher Otto Persiehl, or single women with time on their hands and intrigued by Oriental scholarship. As Klein notes, Hamburg's women played an important part in the city's foundations and education.⁴⁵ Active scholarly participation among women is difficult to establish. Lebedeva was initially not a recognised scholar in Russian academia, but very active.⁴⁶ The scholar Smith-Lewish was not active, if only the proceedings are considered, but she caught up on the latest research, exchanged ideas, networked and wrote a long report for the interested world of theologians in Britain. Laura Goldziher, a regular fixture at the congresses, would have played a significant role alongside her husband, while daughter Persiehl would have come out of little informed interest or because her father wanted her to go, and played no role of importance.⁴⁷ Nina Rosen did not come along.

This variety was similar among the double-paying men, who generally played a larger role. Some governments sent officials for political and representative reasons only, while others were there to talk science, or combine the two, like Rosen. Out of Hamburg's participants, pastor Georg Behrmann and Rabbi Max Grunwald were likely the only ones who could talk on par with the international scholars. The remaining Hamburg visitors came out of curiosity for the intellectual-exotic or to see if this university business may be worthwhile for trade after all. The majority of European participants were academics. Some were dis-

⁴³ Türkan Olcay, "Olga Lebedeva (Madame Gülnar): A Russian Orientalist and Translator Enchants the Ottomans," *SLOVO* 29, no. 2 (2017): 60.

⁴⁴ Jonker, "Gelehrte Damen, Ehefrauen, Wissenschaftlerinnen"; *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 465–67, 478.

⁴⁵ *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 465–67; Manuela Klein, "Frauen aus dem Hamburger Bürgertum gestalten das Leben der Stadt. Stiftungen und Mäzenatentum im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert," in *Bürgertum und Bürgerlichkeit zwischen Kaiserreich und Nationalsozialismus*, Werner Plumpe and Jörg Lesczenski (Mainz: Zabern, 2009), 165–73.

⁴⁶ Olcay, "Olga Lebedeva," 60.

⁴⁷ Smith Lewis, "What I Saw at the Orientalist Congress," 94–95; *Actes du douzième Congrès des orientalistes*, XLVIII.

tinguished professors, others junior scholars, like the Hungarian Iranist Kégl Sandor, who paid out of his own pocket to have the chance to network and exchange thoughts in Hamburg. Many of these junior figures do not show up in the proceedings or articles as active participants, but just like Hamburg set off a professional relationship between Kégl and the German Iranist Paul Horn, these often untenured scholars formed the substructure of the congress' scholarly exchanges.⁴⁸ Other participating men were not connected to academia in any concrete way, but were interested in the latest findings of Oriental studies for religious, literary or adventurous purposes. The number of active participants was thus significantly lower than the seven hundred and forty-nine registrations.

With Hamburg easiest to reach from within Germany nearly half the participants were from Germany and many arrived from Hamburg or the region. A much larger number of scholars from Denmark, the Netherlands, Japan and Switzerland arrived in Hamburg than there was state or institutional support available. Some of these scholars had access to private money from businesses or foundations. Mediterranean countries such as Greece, Spain and Portugal were underrepresented in contrast. The distance and cost of travel to and from Hamburg made attendance easy for some and difficult for others. For comparison, Rome saw high participation from Romania, only topped by the Italian hosts, Germany, France and Great Britain. In Algiers Algerian, French-Colonial and French participation was high.⁴⁹

British-German preponderance among learned institutions present in Hamburg was followed by institutions from the United States, France, Russia, Austria-Hungary, and Italy. These institutionally funded scholarly participants were complemented by national delegations. The German secretary of state, Oswald von Richthofen, had announced Friedrich Rosen as head of the German Reich's delegation in Hamburg in June 1902. Accompanying Rosen from the Auswärtiges Amt were Rosen's former chief at Beirut, Paul Schroeder, and the consul in Saloniki, Johann Heinrich Mordtmann. All three spent their free time dabbling in Oriental studies.⁵⁰ Reflecting the federal structure of Germany, the three amateurs were supplemented by the famous Orientalist Theodor Nöldeke and the

48 Dévényi, Kelecsényi, and Sajó, "Biography. Alexander Kégl (1862–1920). A Polymath of Oriental Studies and His Collection"; *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 478–79.

49 "The Twelfth International Congress of Orientalists," 181; *Actes du douzième Congrès des orientalistes*, XXXIII–LXI.

50 Mordtmann was of Hamburg extraction and Behrmann claimed him as son of the city. Oswald von Richthofen to Johann Heinrich Burchard, 14 June 1902, 39, 111–1 Cl. VII Lit. Rf Nr. 29 Vol. 55 Fasc. 1, StAH; Georg Behrmann, *Hamburgs Orientalisten*, 10; Hans Georg Majer, "Mordtmann, Johann Heinrich," *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 18 (1997): 93–94.

theologian Wilhelm Nowack, who were delegated by the government of Alsace-Lorraine, and the theologian Wilhelm Volck, who was sent by the nearby state of Mecklenburg.⁵¹

The make-up of the German delegation in Hamburg was not exceptional. A total of thirty governments delegated scholars and officials to Hamburg. Greece and Denmark sent with Spyridon Lambros and Vilhelm Thomsen their most eminent scholars. Italy afforded three of their scholars a trip across the Alps. The French government sent a delegation of five, consisting of René Basset, the director of the *École des Lettres* in Algiers, and four equally accomplished scholars from Paris, covering everything from Sinology (Henri Cordier) to Egyptology (Gaston Maspero and Georges Bénédict), as well as Buddhism and Hinduism (Émile Senart). Austria sent an equally mixed delegation of five scholars and Hungary sent a member of parliament. Russia delegated next to Professor Nauphal, the Berlin-born founder of Russian Turkology Vasily Radloff. The notable exception was Great Britain which did not send a single representative. The delegates of the Indian and Ceylonese governments, Lyall and Wickremasinghe, took on the role of British representation. Smith-Lewis, who travelled on Scottish church money, noted that “it is difficult to make foreigners understand why we Anglo-Saxons, or Anglo-Celts, leave to private initiative what is with them a department of the State.”⁵² The Latin American countries Mexico, Paraguay and Argentina were represented alongside the governments of Serbia, Romania and Montenegro, often having delegated a foreign national already resident in Hamburg or at least on the European continent.

The countries under investigation were also present: The government of Siam sent the Indologist Frankfurter, who was serving as a counsel in the Siamese foreign ministry at the time. China sent three delegates from its representation in Berlin, two of whom were in parallel students at Berlin’s university. Turkey sent the career diplomat Mustafa Asım Turgut Bey. The Egyptian government was represented by the two government officials Mustapha Effendi Beyram and Ahmed Zeki Bey, with Zeki Bey known in Egypt as the “Dean of Arabism”. Japan was represented by an education ministry official and two scholars, the historians Sanji Mikami and Kurakichi Shiratori from the Imperial University Tokyo, who travelled all the way from Japan. The Persian government was represented by the legation secretary in Berlin, Hovhannes Khan, a multilingual scholar who

51 *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 448–49; L. Hanisch, *Nachfolger der Exegeten*, 5–6.

52 Smith Lewis, “What I Saw at the Orientalist Congress,” 94; Eckart, “Hamburg Institute of Nautical and Tropical Diseases,” 325.

had translated Shakespeare to his mother tongue Armenian.⁵³ While all other delegations had been announced in the early summer months, the Chinese, Turkish and Persian delegations, all coming from Berlin, only arrived two days into the congress.⁵⁴

The break-up of languages in which the one hundred and fifty-four lectures were held was dominated by the language of the hosts. Ninety-six talks were given in German, twenty-nine in French, twenty-four in English, four in Italian and one in Latin. On the one hand reflective of German having come to surpass French as the international language of science, with English the other accepted language, this German preponderance needs some qualification based on the origins of some of these scholars.⁵⁵ The Austrians, of course, would have spoken in German. Then there were the American representatives of German origin, who spoke in German just as much as many Hungarians. Russian was not an accepted language of presentation, and the scholars from St. Petersburg, Helsinki or Dorpat spoke either in German or French. Most Italians spoke in Italian or switched to French. The Swiss from Geneva spoke French, the others German. Many Scandinavians and Dutch spoke in German, while others opted for French. Indian lecturers spoke in English. The Zeki Bey held one talk in German and another in French. The Japanese scholars at the congress spoke in English or German, the Armenians spoke in German or French.⁵⁶ In the general assemblies, lectures were often held in German as a courtesy to the hosts and to make comprehension easier for a less multi-lingual audience.

As in other congresses European representation was dominant. The core of international scholars, predominantly from Great Britain, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary and Russia, were recurrent fixtures, whose participation was sponsored either by governments directly, through government financed institutions or privately. This great-power dominance, however, did not preclude scholars from smaller European countries from holding considerable significance in the

53 Oskar Frankfurter, "The Late King Chulalongkorn," *Journal of the Siam Society* VII, no. 2 (1911): 1–4; Andreas Stoffers, "Oskar Frankfurter – ein Leben für Thailand," *Thailand-Rundschau der Deutsch-Thailändischen Gesellschaft* 9, no. 2 (1996): 15–17; Katja Kaiser, "'Mischehen' in Kiautschou. Die deutsch-chinesische Familie Li," in *Frauen in den Deutschen Kolonien*, Marianne Bechhaus-Gerst and Mechthild Leutner (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2009), 92; Ryad, "Aḥmad Zaki Pasha," 131; V. III. Vardanyan, "Johannes Masehyan [in Armenian]," *Historical-Philological Journal* 2–3 (1967): 228–36; *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 447–50.

54 Frantzius to Senate of Hamburg, 6 September 1902, 56, 111–1 Cl. VII Lit. Rf Nr. 29 Vol. 55 Fasc. 1, StAH; *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 433–35.

55 Roswitha Reinbothe, *Deutsch als internationale Wissenschaftssprache und der Boykott nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2006), 23–29.

56 *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, V–XIII.

various Orientalist sub-fields. The section presidents often stemmed from smaller countries. Scholars from the Orient itself were present, but mostly not in prominent roles and their contributions were in some cases tolerated rather than taken seriously. But in particular the contributions of a number of presenters from India, Armenia and Japan show that conforming to the prevalent academic style and demeanour were together with original contributions to fields of research agendas more significant than ethnic markers. This was a colourful crowd of Orientalist scholars of varying degrees, family members, global merchants, local publishers, diplomats and a plethora of others, whose interests were sparked by reasons far and wide. The German dominance in all of these representations went under a bit in Hamburg, as it was accepted as a given that the de facto language of congress communication would be German in a congress taking place in a German city. The federal nature of the German state was also still very much emphasised, allowing for intra-German difference in the proudly Hanseatic free city of Hamburg and representatives from abroad to perceive of Hamburg as a trade city first and then part of Germany.

2.4 Small Sections

In the end, there was no section dealing with “Kolonial-Waren” at the Hamburg congress. The sections on African languages and the East Indies nearly met the same fate and ended up consisting of one lecture each. It was not only that Hans Stumme’s talk about metrical questions in Hausa and Berber poetry was not a major public attraction, but that the fields of inquiry of African languages or Malayan did not figure on larger research agendas of Orientalists.⁵⁷ While these abrogated sections at least conformed to the usage of the philological toolbox, a mundane section of “Kolonial-Waren” did not fit into the scope of the congress. The congresses were no exhibitions of goods. Texts, not things, were studied. To compensate the lack of practical Oriental studies the museums of the city exhibited Asian textiles and metalwares, and the German Palästina-Verein organised a degustation of wine grown at Rishon LeTzion attended by many American and German Orientalists into the Holy Land.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Senior G. Behrmann and Friedrich Christian Sieveking, *XIII. internationaler Orientalisten-Kongress. Sechster Bericht* (Hamburg: Persiehl, 1902); *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 353–54.

⁵⁸ “Der Orientalisten-Kongress beim Palästina-Wein,” *Hamburgischer Correspondent* 424 (10 September 1902).

Another section that saw at eight presentations relatively little participation was that on “Wechselwirkungen” ~(interdependencies) between Orient and Occident. The section had been ill-defined in previous congresses and focussed almost entirely on ancient Greece and the Byzantine Empire. The Byzantinist Karl Krumbacher hoped that the section would “represent the systematic research of the countless strings, that connects the for Europeans so seemingly far removed aggregate “Orient” with our native culture.” In line with Krumbacher, the section worked its way through the relations between Indian Jews and European royal houses in the sixteenth century, the influence of Oriental medical practice on popular medicine in the Balkans, Assyrian-Byzantine relations and the “west-eastern book” of the Septuagint (the translation of the Hebrew Old Testament to Greek) stemming from the East but adapted to the West through its Hellenisation. Alongside Krumbacher, Nöldeke and others, Rosen participated in the discussion about the Septuagint – likely in connection with the incomplete manuscript of his father that hypothesised the fusion of Jews and Phoenicians. Even more of a potpourri of topics than the other sections, its theme of exchange struck a chord with the Hamburg audience. The with the *Hamburger Nachrichten* still “fondly remembering” the section two years later.⁵⁹ All other sections dealt with the canonical scholarly Orient: Egyptology (seventeen presentations), Semitology (thirty), Islam (nineteen), Indo-European Linguistics (ten), India (thirty-three), Iran (nineteen) and as a relatively recent addition Central Asia (twelve). The break-up of languages was more or less the same in all sections, with lectures in German vastly outnumbering all others.⁶⁰ Between the “etymology of the word dog” across the Indo-European languages to “Semitic terms of endearment”, one hundred and fifty-four lectures were held.

2.5 The India Section and the Crossroads of Central Asian Archaeology

The Indian section was by and large concerned with matters of Sanskrit and ancient India (Gubernatis, Paul Oltramare, Arthur Macdonell, Vishvanath Vaidya), which included the presentation or comparison of ancient manuscripts (Julius Jolly, Ernst Leumann), cartography (Pullé) or archaeological research in Ceylon (Wickremasinghe) and work on an Indo-Aryan Bibliography (Ernst Kuhn). In the

⁵⁹ “XIII. internationaler Orientalisten-Kongress,” *Hamburger Nachrichten* 213 (10 September 1902); “Nachklang zum XIII. Orientalisten-Kongress in Hamburg,” *Hamburger Nachrichten* 236 (3 April 1904).

⁶⁰ *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, V – XIII.

field of linguistic categorisation the main project, sponsored by the British Indian government, was a multi-volume linguistic survey of India, which at completion was to include eleven tomes reaching from Bengali to the Gypsy languages, but not Urdu. With the survey a recurrent agenda item in previous and later congresses, at Hamburg Lyall proudly presented the volumes on Tibeto-Burman languages and on Eastern Hindi.⁶¹ A number of the presentations were directly linked to an expression of gratitude to the support afforded by governments or academies. Ernst Kuhn had gathered a circle of renowned Indologists from Germany (Lorenz Kielhorn, Rosen's Doktorvater Ernst Windisch, Jacob Wackernagel, Lucian Schermann) and Austria (Leopold von Schroeder), who had used their channels to organise funds for Kuhn's Indo-Aryan bibliography. Supporters included the Indian government, the royal academies in Göttingen and Leipzig and the Imperial Academy in Vienna.⁶² The 1899 congress in Rome had passed a resolution asking national governments to support Kuhn's project, which had made finding support easier.⁶³ Furthermore, Wickresaminghe and Pullé expressed gratitude for the support their projects had received. Wickresaminghe had to answer a query by Wilhelm Geiger, if he could not ensure that the government in Colombo would send official publications to Europe. While Geiger was in Colombo in 1895/6 there had not been any problems with purchases, but since then he had not received any scholarly publications from Ceylon. Wickresaminghe could surely use his "personal relations" with the government.⁶⁴

Noteworthy were several contributions concerned with Buddhism and/or China in the India section (Windisch, J.S. Speyer, U. Wogihara, Arthur Pfungst, Masahar Anesaki). In particular, Arthur Pfungst's discussion of the contemporary spread of Buddhism in India and in the West was received with a lively discussion. The industrialist Pfungst saw the spread of Buddhism in India as a revival after seven hundred years of Muslim oppression and thought the religion more progressive than Hinduism and better suitable for Indians than Christianity for moral regeneration.⁶⁵ For Pfungst the spread of Buddhism was a worldwide phenomenon, with temples opening in San Francisco and Liverpool. A year later a Buddhist missionary club would be founded in Germany by Karl Seidenstück-

61 *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 78–79; Rabault-Feuerhahn, "Congrès des orientalistes," 51.

62 *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 83.

63 "The Twelfth International Congress of Orientalists," 184.

64 *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 77.

65 See Truschke for recent scholarship taking issue with the "Islam killed Indian Buddhism" narrative. Audrey Truschke, "The Power of the Islamic Sword in Narrating the Death of Indian Buddhism," *History of Religions* 57, no. 4 (2018): 409.

er. Mirroring what Marchand observes as the scepticism of German Indologists to the productions of Buddhist converts, the Hamburg-born Gustav Oppert, having lived and taught in Madras from 1872 to 1893, expressed his doubts that the somewhat Buddhist Pfungst meant Buddhists, but was talking about theosophist followers of the Russian occultist Helena Blavatsky.⁶⁶ The Japanese scholar of religions Masahar Anesaki, who was at the time studying in Europe, would not determine if the esoteric variant of Blavatsky was less genuine than orthodox Buddhism, but noted on a recent rift between the two strands of belief in Colombo.⁶⁷ Buddhism and Central Asia were of particular interest to the India section, as in recent years the antique connections between the subcontinent and inner Asia had become a hot topic of research, but also as Buddhism was starting to gain a global following with the religion promising to be the religion for a new modern world.⁶⁸

With many explorations of Buddhism and Central Asia starting from British India, it was consequential that it is the section's most applauded presentation belonged geographically to the Central and East Asia section. As early as 1889 Buddhist manuscripts from a pre-Islamic era had been found in Central Asia, and in the mid-1890s Sven Hedin, a Swedish explorer, came back from Turfan with maps detailing where further exploration could prove fruitful. Hedin had taken photographs of sites in Central Asia, further popularising the region among scholars and a wider public as a place where treasures and clues about the origins of humanity could be found. As scholars expected to find the crossroads of Indo-European, Turkic, Chinese, Christian and Islamic civilisations in the region along the Silk Road, a pan-European scholarly obsession set in to find out more about these early developments mankind.⁶⁹ Scholars in British India also developed an interest in the Buddhist past of neighbouring Chinese Turkestan. Lyall organised support for scholars like Rudolf Hoernlé, who worked on manuscripts and xylographs (wooden block-prints) that had been found just several hundred miles away from British Kashmir. The increase in European interest in artefacts caused locals to forge items and sell them to unsuspecting explorers, as Hoernlé was distraught to have publicly pointed out on some of his findings. Like other European Orientalist scholars in St. Petersburg

66 Manjapra, *Age of Entanglement*, 70; Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 270–79.

67 *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 63–65.

68 Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 270–71.

69 Lia Genovese, trans. and ed., “Proceedings (Extract) of XII International Congress of Orientalists, Rome, October 1899,” *IDP International Dunhuang Project* (2006): 8. <http://idp.bl.uk/4DCGI/education/orientalists/index.a4d>; Torma, *Turkestan-Expeditionen*, 67–82; Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 417.

Hoernlé believed that the origins of the Aryans could be found somewhere north of the Himalayas – Max Müller, the German Indologist teaching in Great Britain, had postulated that the origins of the Aryans would be found in Central Asia, where a small clan of Aryans had spoken a language from which Indo-European languages like Sanskrit and Greek descended.

In the last decades of the nineteenth century Buddhism had also become popular among the Russian intelligentsia, who like many liberal Russian Orientalists perceived of Russia's mission to bring together Orient and Occident. In 1898 the Russian scholar Dmitrij Alexandrowic Klementz travelled to Turfan in northern Chinese Turkestan to investigate on behalf of the Russian Imperial Academy of the Sciences. He returned from Russia's close abroad with rich archaeological plunder.⁷⁰ Like Hoernlé, Klementz brought back plenty of forgeries to St. Petersburg, but the authentic material was enough for the Russian-German Turkologist Vasily Radlov to present his colleague's findings at the congress in Rome a year later. He could prove a "Buddhist past of the [Turkic] Uighurs" before Islam and the Russian discoveries were greeted with much applause.⁷¹ The gathered scholars immediately advocated for a number of measures that should intensify research in Central Asia. The Russian Tsar needed to be thanked for his support of Klementz' expedition and should be offered to become the patron of an international expedition to crown Klementz' findings. Émile Sénart, an Indologist and head of the French Silk Road Committee, had this proposal readily accepted by acclamation. The Orientalists in Rome were jubilant and in the coming months a Central and East Asia exploration fund was set up to ensure financial means for future expeditions.

The next mission was to be headed by a Russian delegation with German collaboration. Initial plans between the Russian delegation and the German archaeologist Albert Grünwedel were made right after the congress, but a nationalist backlash in Russia brought the international expedition under Russian patronage to a halt.⁷² But the deliberations that had taken place in Rome and in its af-

70 Caren Dreyer, "Die Expeditionen der Russen auf der Seidenstraße," in *Das Große Spiel. Archäologie und Politik Zur Zeit des Kolonialismus (1860–1940)*, Charlotte Trümpler (Essen: Ruhr Museum, 2008), 182; Vera Tolz, *Russia's Own Orient. The Politics of Identity and Oriental Studies in the Late Imperial and Early Soviet Periods*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 4, 61; David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, *Russian Orientalism. Asia in the Russian Mind from Peter the Great to the Emigration* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 189–95; Romila Thapar, "The Theory of Aryan Race and India: History and Politics," *Social Scientist* 24, no. 1/3 (1996): 5.

71 Genovese, "Congress of Orientalists," 4.

72 *Actes du douzième Congrès des orientalistes*, CLVII; Dreyer, "Russen auf der Seidenstraße," 182; Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 419.

termath in Berlin between the Russian scholars around Klementz and Radloff and the Germans Grünwedel, Georg Huth and Friedrich Wilhelm Karl Müller, as well as consultations with the Hungarian Turkologists Ármín Vámbéry and Ignác Kúnos, had cemented the opinion that an expedition had to be organised – with or without the Russian colleagues. As Marchand summarises, “Grünwedel was even more excited... after Klementz’s finds were publicly bruited at the Congress of Orientalists in Rome; there is nothing like the validation by fellow experts to convince a scholar to follow his or her instincts.”⁷³

In the meantime the British-Hungarian scholar Marc Aurel Stein – like Hoernlé working for the British India government and a rival of Hoernlé (it had been Stein, who uncovered the forgeries that Hoernlé had worked on) – had listened closely in Rome. Educated in Vienna, Leipzig and Tübingen, Stein found employment in the British Indian education system in the Punjab in 1887. Influenced by Heddin’s publications, Stein developed an interest in Buddhist civilisation on the northern slopes of the Himalayas. The reports in Rome further kindled his interest. Before returning from Europe to India in 1899, Stein consulted with his Parisian colleagues Sénart, Sylvain Lévy and others. Back in India he convinced the Indian government to fund a trip across the Himalaya to Hotan. Returning to India fourteen months later, Stein had gathered evidence, some 1,300 kilometres south from Turfan, that demonstrated a Buddhist past also in the Turkic-speaking region of Hotan.⁷⁴ With these findings Stein travelled to Hamburg in September 1902, where he was met with major sensation in the Indian section. On recommendation of the French geographer Henri Cordier and seconded by the British Sanskritist Arthur Macdonell, the British viceroy was thanked, as well as the supportive Chinese officials and the Russian consul in Hotan. The expression of gratitude was tied to the hope of making financial means available for the adequate publication of the findings. It is not clear if the three Chinese representatives at the congress witnessed Stein’s presentation. They may also have missed the planning meeting of the International Association for the Exploration of Central and East Asia, held alongside the congress, in which the further intensification of research in the region was discussed. The resolution to that effect passed in the second plenary session on 10 Septem-

⁷³ Yaldiz, “Deutsche Turfan-Expeditionen,” 190; Genovese, “Congress of Orientalists,” 11–13; Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 419.

⁷⁴ Mirsky, *Aurel Stein*, 107; Peter Hopkirk, *Foreign Devils on the Silk Road: The Search for the Lost Treasures of Central Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), 109.

ber they did not miss, as their presence in that session was “vividly celebrated”.⁷⁵ The jubilation at Hamburg would not only help Stein assure the publication of his findings, but also gave him the stamp of approval needed for organising and funding his next expedition in to Central Asia in 1906. More immediately, Hamburg’s jubilations in September 1902 further spurred the interest of other Orientalists in the Central Asian plateau, finally pushing Grünwedel’s fundraising with the German government over the edge to make his expedition to Chinese Turkestan – Turfan in his case – come true. He left two months after the congress.⁷⁶

Haphazard in all but appearance, this was how politics and scholarship interacted productively at the International Orientalist Congresses. Research was brought to the congress, resonated with other scholars and their research, inspired contemplation and was endorsed by peers. These peers would together with government representatives give the stamp of approval needed for funding and support of future research. The press coverage of the congresses only reinforced the public relevance that researchers could point to in their lobbying with the state. Cerebral inspiration met with the promise of wide recognition, created interest among others to pursue research in adjacent fields, the results of which could then again be presented at a congress, developing aspects and scope of research hypotheses and filtering out fraudulent evidence, leading to potentially even more attention directed to a field of analysis.

That these research results amounted to material theft was excused by the collectors with the reasoning that they were able to offer better conditions for conservation than the place where the artefacts were found. Often murals or artefacts were hacked to pieces for transportation but this was also accepted without protest. The representatives of the land from where the treasures were removed were accessories to the act but Turkic history was also not central to Chinese culture, just as the Buddhist past did not seem to interest many Muslim Uighurs. But while the plundering of artefacts at Hotan and Turfan coincided with other acts looting in imperial contexts, they were, as Osterhammel has argued, enabled by imperial structures, but not driving the Central Asian great game in view of colonial expansion. As demonstrated by the concerted and rivaling lobbying efforts of scholars at the International Orientalist Congresses, governments did not accord larger political significance to these missions. Expedi-

⁷⁵ *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 386–88; Frantzius to Senate of Hamburg, 6 September 1902, 56, 111–1 Cl. VII Lit. Rf Nr. 29 Vol. 55 Fasc. 1, StAH; “XIII. internationaler Orientalisten-Kongress,” *Hamburgischer Correspondent* 424 (10 September 1902).

⁷⁶ *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 86–87.

tions often lacked adequate funding, staff and equipment – anything more political than artefact collection was infeasible.⁷⁷

2.6 The Iran Section and the Resuscitation of a Scholarly Career

The mix of lectures in the Iranian section was similar to that of the Indian section. Next to four lectures about ancient Iran (Andreas, Hermann Collitz, Jivanji Jamshedji Modi) and two on middle Iranian (Lawrence Mills, Johann Kirste), two dictionary projects (Paul Horn and Christian Bartholomae) were discussed. Clément Huart announced the publication of the linguistic findings of the expedition of Jacques de Morgan in Iran 1889–1891, financed by the French ministry of public education. Morgan had found a number of manuscripts in Mandaic (an Aramaic language that was spoken across the Fertile Crescent and Iran) and studied various dialects of Kurdish, Lurian, Persian, Turkic, and modern Hebrew while travelling Iran. Eight lectures were concerned with Armenia or the Armenian language and one with the Kurds in Iran. Out of the seven presenters in Armenian topics four (Gregor Chalatiantz, B. Chalatiantz, Lévon Msérianz and H. Arakélian) were of Armenian origin, while C.F. Lehmann, F. Finck and Josef Karst presented German Armenian studies in the Iran section. Gregor and B. Chalatiantz both gave presentations about the origins of Armenian history in German, while Msérianz, who usually published in Russian, spoke in French about Chaldean (a Semitic language from the Eastern Babylonia ninth to sixth centuries BCE) elements in the Armenian language. H. Arakélian spoke in French on the Kurds. Armenia was not an independent country, but with Armenian nationalism on the rise in the Ottoman and Russian Empires, exploring a glorious past in the presence of a congress of fellow Christian nations was positive reinforcement and a form of extra-Europeans actively writing their own narratives in the European Orientalist context. In the case of the Russian Empire Armenian studies were also supported as part of integrating Armenian culture into the Russian Eurasian ideology.

Suitable reference works were an important issue for Iranian studies at the time. Bartholomae's dictionary of ancient Iranian had just been completed, and he could thus hand it over to other scholars to use in their research. Horn was not quite as far with his new Persian dictionary. In 1893 he had published a etymology of new Persian, which was considered a milestone of Persian studies well into the second half of the twentieth century. Horn recalled to his colleagues that

⁷⁷ Osterhammel, "Das große Spiel in Zentralasien," 151–53.

he had been advocating for a new Persian dictionary for ten years, and that the standard works in use at the time were outdated: “Everyone, who was more intrinsically involved in the field of new Persian, had to make his own dictionary!” This slowed down scholarship, as was the case in Strasbourg, where three scholars were working with two insufficient vocabulary lists. Leading up to the congress he had been in contact with the who’s who in European Iranian studies, including Browne, Ethé, de Goeje, Houtsma, Huart, Justi, Nicholson and Nöldeke, and was hoping that Denison Ross in Calcutta would also contribute to his work. Horn believed that both “language and contemporary research would in equal parts benefit” from such a dictionary. In the ensuing discussion Browne, Nöldeke and Kégl supported Horn’s endeavours. Frau Polak, the widow of the deceased doctor for many years of Naser ed-din Shah, also offered her endorsement.⁷⁸ Himself an author of Persian language guides that had been positively reviewed by Horn, Rosen equally lent his support to Horn’s endeavours. However, new Persian provided understanding only of the less studied medieval and contemporary periods. Part of Horn’s drive for a dictionary project was to gain a higher ground and funding for his research agenda in academia, as he ranked only as a secondary Iranist behind Christian Bartholomae and Theodor Nöldeke, whose interest lay with the ancient Iranians. No resolution was passed by the section. Rosen would in years to come support his colleague from SOS days through having him work on the Persian divan of the Ottoman Sultan Selim II. Horn never accomplished his all-encompassing dictionary and died in 1908 after a long illness. In the same year, Browne noted the continuing lack of an academic dictionary of Persian.⁷⁹

Among the antique topics in the section the lecture by the Zoroastrian priest from Bombay, Jivanji Jamshedji Modi, stuck out. Modi had been a regular participant of previous congresses, with his four presentations at the congress in Stockholm in 1889 gaining him the Swedish king’s attention and the *Litteris et Artibus* gold medal for his contributions to culture.⁸⁰ Modi had not travelled to

⁷⁸ *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 117–21; Michael Knüppel and Aloïs van Tongerloo, *Die orientalistische Gelehrtenrepublik am Vorabend des Ersten Weltkrieges. Der Briefwechsel zwischen Willi Bang(-Kaup) und Friedrich Carl Andreas aus den Jahren 1889 bis 1914* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012), 30; Tolz, *Russia’s Own Orient*, 40.

⁷⁹ Erich Kettenhofen, “Paul Horn,” *Encyclopædia Iranica* Vol. XII, no. 5 (2004): 476; Kreiser, “Divan for the Sultan,” 223–43; Browne, *Literary History. Earliest Times*, 495.

⁸⁰ Harilala Harshadaraya Dhruva, *The Orientalist Congress of 1889* (Surat: Gujerat Press, 1893), 1; *Actes du douzième Congrès des orientalistes*, LXI; Marzban Jamshedji Giara, *Shams-ul-Ulama Dr. Sir Ervard Jivanji Jamshedji Modi (1854–1933). An Illustrated Biography* (Mumbai: Din Publications, 2001), 10–11.

Hamburg from Bombay. Instead he had sent his paper, which was presented by Heinrich Hübschmann. In it Modi compared the Zoroastrian archangels to those in the Jewish tradition, focussing on the similarities between the Zoroastrian Mithra and the Jewish Michael. With Mithra older, Modi suggested, Michael may have been sampled on the Zoroastrian figure and found its way through Judaism to Christianity into the Western world. Like his Armenian colleagues, Modi asserted his Oriental culture at the Orientalist Congress and showed how European cultures were derivative of the East and crossed the Indo-European-Semitic languages divide. Another presentation that spoke to these fluidities of intellectual movements across space and time in the larger contexts of the origins of peoples and nations to be reached through the power of philology nearly did not come to pass. Had it not been for the last minute intervention of a couple of friends, Friedrich Carl Andreas would not have had the chance to speak in Hamburg about the “nationality of Cyrus” and the doubts he held over his Aryan heritage, nor would he have presented his theory on Avesta script (old Iranian) that would become widely known in Iranian studies as the “Andreas Theory”.

On a home visit in Berlin in the summer of 1902 the German governor of Samoa, Wilhelm Solf, was jubilant: “The evening together with Andreas has set both me and my brother into literal exaltation”, he wrote to his old friend Friedrich Rosen. Solf insisted that Andreas ought to present his research at the Orientalist congress in Hamburg two months later.⁸¹ Solf had entered Germany’s colonial apparatus via the diplomatic service in India and had first been placed to German East Africa and then to German Samoa. After studies of ancient India in Berlin, Göttingen, Halle and Kiel, Solf had learned Persian and Hindustani with Andreas and Rosen at the SOS in 1887–8. While Solf and Rosen were on the way to making a career of the East at the time, Andreas had at the ripe age of forty-one for the first time gotten hold of a seemingly stable position in the late 1880s.⁸²

Andreas, in popular culture mostly known as the romantically-laughable appendix of his pioneering psychologist wife Lou Andreas-Salomé, was born in 1846 in Batavia in the Dutch East Indies. His father was a fallen Armenian prince of the house of Bagratuni from the city of Isfahan and his mother the daughter of a northern German doctor and a Malay woman from Java. When Andreas was six, the family moved to Hamburg. Andreas studied Orientalistik in Halle, Erlangen, Göttingen, and Copenhagen. After participating in the battle of Le Mans in the Franco-Prussian War, Andreas got on board the German funded Venus expedi-

⁸¹ Wilhelm Solf to Friedrich Rosen, 5 July 1902, 410 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG.

⁸² Eduard Sachau to F. C. Andreas, 13 March 1887, 369 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG.

tion – an astronomical mission observing the Venus passage in front of the sun – to Isfahan in 1874. After the expedition's money had run out, Andreas stayed in Persia in the service of the Iranian postal ministry. Extensively travelling Iran, he studied the different languages and dialects of the country along the way.⁸³ Upon his return to Germany in 1882, Andreas was without means. Andreas had a reputation as intellectually brilliant, but his running out of employment and money was equally known in Orientalist circles. Iranist Friedrich von Spiegel wrote to the Indologist Albrecht Weber in 1876 that “the man has carelessly muddled his career and has used public moneys as his own before. In the end he remains an Asian and is organised differently than we are: past and future do not even exist for him, he only lives in the present and enjoys that as much as he can.”⁸⁴ The lecturer position at the SOS in 1887 promised to remedy the issue of , but pleasure was short-lived, as Andreas and Rosen fell out with the director Sachau over academic standards after two years. As Rosen moved on to the diplomatic service, Andreas remained without position in a small flat in Schmargendorf outside Berlin, giving private Persian lessons to recommendations of previous students and colleagues.⁸⁵

Rosen and Andreas stayed in touch. They successfully took the SOS to court together over outstanding salaries, and the two maintained a scholarly relationship, with Andreas benefitting from manuscripts and news from Iran and sending Rosen European publications and updates on academia. Their friendship continued upon Rosen's return to Berlin in 1900.⁸⁶ When Andreas and Rosen spent said evening with Solf and his banker brother in early July 1902, Rosen had briefly before been appointed the official German representative at the congress in Hamburg. Solf insisted to Rosen that Andreas needed to travel to Hamburg, as it would be “a terrible pity, if a savant of the capacity and unselfish thirst for knowledge, like Andreas, would need to hide his light under a bushel,

⁸³ Enno Littmann, “Andreas, Friedrich Carl,” *Neue Deutsche Biographie* 1 (1953): 284; Hilmar W. Duerbeck, “The German Transit of Venus Expeditions of 1874 and 1882: Organization, Methods, Stations, Results,” *Journal of Astronomical History and Heritage* 7, no. 1 (2004): 8–17; Knüppel and van Tongerloo, *Bang und Andreas*, 10–13.

⁸⁴ Friedrich von Spiegel to Albrecht Weber, 26 January 1876, 16, 1850 Darmstaedter 2b, StaBiB.

⁸⁵ Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 8 October 1889, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 28 November 1894, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Arthur Christensen to F. C. Andreas, 8 May 1902, copy, I 1 Utilg. 578, KB – HA.

⁸⁶ Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 7 February 1891, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Nina Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 1902, 362 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Nina Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 11 December 1904, 362 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG.

or as I said that evening, allow other people to put his light into their lantern.”⁸⁷ Solf and his brother would support Andreas’ journey financially, he offered. Rosen agreed with Solf, and had Andreas know in a letter, that “material obstacles” should not prevent him from going to Hamburg, and that Andreas’ “friends and admirers would count it to their greatest honour, if you would want to make use of their help.” With Andreas’ dignity thus kept intact, Solf arranged for his brother to send Andreas the 300 Mark needed to attend the congress. Andreas had two months to prepare for his comeback on the international stage of Orientalists. The rising diplomat and the sidelined doyen of Iranian studies coordinated their travel and arrived in Hamburg’s Savoy Hotel on September 3.⁸⁸

In the opening session of the Iran section a day later Andreas presented two papers. In the first, titled “On some questions of the oldest Persian history”, he analysed the word Kurush, the old-Iranian word for the name of the founder of the Achaemenid Empire Cyrus (sixth century BCE). Andreas compared the word Kurush with the cuneiform and Babylonian variation Kurash of the same name, which had an a-vowel as opposed to the u-vowel in the Iranian. He argued that one of the two pronunciations and spellings must have been the original. This original word would have belonged to the language of the people Cyrus originated from. Thus, the a/u differentiation determined Cyrus’ nationality. Andreas went on to explain that the u-vowel of the Iranian tribes had never been found to have transformed to the a-vowel in Babylonian. The Iranian could thus not be the original of the name of Cyrus, which meant that Cyrus “was not a Persian”. Andreas ruled out that Cyrus was of Babylonian descent, based on other historical studies, which meant that he would belong to the second people using cuneiform, the Anshan, who spoke Elamite, an isolate language predating the Iranian languages. In the second part of his presentation Andreas analysed the various peoples at Naqsh-e Rostam, the grave of Darius (sixth to fifth century BCE), representing the multiple peoples that had been ruled by the Achaemenid Empire.

Andreas’ categorisation of the subjects of Darius was generally applauded. But Lehmann took issue with Andreas grouping Cyrus with the non-Iranian speaking Anshan. He could simply “not believe that Cyrus was not an Aryan”. Eduard Meyer seconded Lehmann’s doubts. Seeing their predispositions rattled, they conceded the possibility that the Achaemeindes, as Andreas had outlined,

87 Nina Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 1902, 362 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Wilhelm Solf to Friedrich Rosen, 5 July 1902, 410 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG.

88 Wilhelm Solf to F. C. Andreas, 17 July 1902, 410 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 25 August 1902, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Wohnungsausschuss, 1902, 111–1 Cl. VII Lit. Rf Nr. 29 Vol. 55 Fasc. 9, StAH.

were not “pure Aryans” and that Cyrus’ mother may in fact have been an Anshan. The father would surely have been Aryan though.⁸⁹ Challenging central historical assumptions had already been provocative. In his second paper about the creation of the Avesta alphabet and its original sounds, Andreas postulated that Avesta had been originally written in a different script pioneered by the Parthians called Arsacid. Andreas’ theory was that in Sasanian times (third to seventh century CE) Arsacid fused into the newly created Avesta script. Thus Arsacid, also an Indo-European language, was the original that needed to be studied, whereas Avesta, that supposed Indo-European original language, was but an distortion.⁹⁰ This was the stuff of the philologists. Andreas’s presentations, full contestations of the discipline’s central assumptions, were controversially discussed and his theses met with “high recognition”.⁹¹ The discussion of the Andreas theory went on until the early 1960s, with some arguing vehemently against and others taking Andreas’ side. Eventually, Andreas’ Arsacid theory was discarded.⁹²

The controversy surrounding Andreas’ presentation was enough cause to put him back onto the scene. After their return to Berlin, Rosen started lobbying for Andreas. In January 1903 the Swiss Indo-Germanist philologist Jacob Wackernagel of Göttingen, who had also attended the congress in Hamburg, contacted Rosen with the information that an extraordinary professorship in Göttingen was to open up. Could Rosen recommend Andreas, and perhaps clarify what had happened at the SOS fifteen years earlier, Wackernagel inquired. Having been sufficiently assured by Rosen that Andreas had not been at fault at the SOS and was a reliable lecturer, Wackernagel and the finding commission in Göttingen began to rely on Rosen to have him press for Andreas with the minister of culture and education, Friedrich Althoff, who had the authority to make professorial appointments and create university chairs. Although Rosen and Althoff had been on opposing sides of the conflict with Sachau at the SOS, the result of a meeting Rosen had with Althoff was “favourable”; as of the summer semester 1903, Andreas should become professor of Orientalistik at the University of Göttingen. As there did not exist a chair for Iranistik itself in Göttingen yet, it would have to be created for Andreas. The extraordinary professorship Andreas was ap-

⁸⁹ *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 93–98.

⁹⁰ *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 99–106.

⁹¹ Friedrich Rosen to Oskar Mann, 2 March 1903, 6, 1888 Darmstaedter 2b, StaBiB; *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 106.

⁹² Lentz, MacKenzie, and Schlerath, “Andreas, Friedrich Carl,” 30.

pointed to in Göttingen was provisional until 1904 but subsequently extended indefinitely.⁹³

In his memoirs Rosen noted in passing that Althoff had casually one day suggested to him that something should be done for Andreas – like have a chair created for him in Göttingen.⁹⁴ Rosen was a bit modest here. It had really been him who had orchestrated Andreas' appointment. Despite “material obstacles” Rosen navigated his friend to Hamburg, where his intellectual brilliance was assured to shine and gain him the stamp of approval from his colleagues needed to get him back into formal academia. From there, Rosen had worked together with the sufficiently impressed Orientalists of Göttingen to convert Andreas' success into his appointment to a professorship. The congress in Hamburg had served in the case of this scholarly-political friendship as a public platform that resuscitated an academic career and led to the creation of a new university programme. Politics and scholarship went hand in hand. Although this was a matter internal to Germany, by gaining approval on the international stage, Andreas' intellectual brilliance was now to be afforded national governmental support. The actor Rosen was central in this operation. Committed to the cause of scholarship still, his place in the *Auswärtiges Amt* invested him with considerable power that he could leverage. In notable contrast to fifteen years earlier when Rosen and Andreas had resigned from the SOS when they refused to make their scholarship subservient purely to political needs, in 1902/3 Rosen leveraged his power not for the political purpose of accruing more power or making scholarship applicable for politics, but in support of scholarship for the sake of scholarship – and, of course, for his friend.⁹⁵

93 Friedrich Rosen to Oskar Mann, 2 March 1903, 6, 1888 Darmstaedter 2b, StaBiB; Jacob Wackernagel to Friedrich Rosen, 29 January 1903, 1901–5 Berufung von Prof. Andreas nach Göttingen, ASWPC; Jacob Wackernagel to Friedrich Rosen, 23 February 1903, 1901–5 Berufung von Prof. Andreas nach Göttingen, ASWPC; Jacob Wackernagel to Friedrich Rosen, 24 February 1903, 1901–5 Berufung von Prof. Andreas nach Göttingen, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 28 February 1903, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG.

94 Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 7 February 1891, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 31–32.

95 In 1911, the Göttingen colleagues Andreas and Wackernagel collaborated on a history of the Avesta. It centrally underpinned Oswald Spengler's discarding of the Aryan myth in his 1918 *Untergang des Abendland*. Aloïs van Tongerloo and Michael Knüppel, “Einige Briefe Robert Edmond Gauthiots (1876–1916) and Willy Bang Kaup und Friedrich Carl Andreas aus den Jahren 1909–1911,” *Berliner Indologische Studien* 21 (2013): 22; Oswald Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes. Umriss einer Morphologie der Weltgeschichte. Gestalt und Wirklichkeit* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1920), 201; Lentz, MacKenzie, and Schlerath, “Andreas, Friedrich Carl,” 30.

2.7 The Sections of Semitics, Islam and Central Asia

With the Central and East Asian section robbed of Stein's Hotan results, its main attraction, also to a wider public, was an overview of Chinese reformist writings of the nineteenth century. Old-Turkic topics were discussed, the issue of the Huns and whether they were the same as the Hungarians, questions of Finno-Ugric and developments in the study of history in Japan.⁹⁶ The Semitic and Islam sections held more highlights. The lecture of the Heidelberg professor Adalbert Merx stuck out, who recycled an earlier speech about the influence of the Old Testament on the writing of national and universal history. He claimed that the scriptures bore the seeds for both. Universal history writing was desirable but national history writing was dominant at all times. Merx's lecture benefited from being held in the first plenary session, despite belonging to the Semitic section, and thus was reprinted widely in the newspapers. But specialist scholars like Smith-Lewis also praised his speech as "most important".⁹⁷ Semitic languages meant mostly everything having to do with the Old Testament, ancient Israel and Palestine. Arabic was largely excluded and delegated to the section on Islam, as were other Semitic languages that were not closely related to the Bible like Amazigh (Berber). Rosen's friend Littmann, who had been studying Amharic with an Abyssinian priest in Jerusalem two years earlier, tried without much success to spark his colleagues' support for other Semitic languages by giving a talk about "Semitic popular poetry in Abyssinia". Littmann left a "great impression" with Ignaz Goldziher but saw that he would not get any employment in the field in Europe. He left for Princeton and shifted his research attention to Syria and Palestine. A few years later Rosen's orchestration of the Aksum excavations under Littmann's leadership made Germany the "birthplace of Ethiopian studies".⁹⁸

More conforming to general research interest was a new edition of the Septuagint that was soon to be published under the direction of the Bible scholar

⁹⁶ Margit Köves, "Modes of Orientalism in Hungarian Letters and Learning of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," in *Deploying Orientalism in Culture and History. From Germany to Central and Eastern Europe*, James Hodkinson, et al. (Rochester: Camden House, 2013), 166–90; *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 159–90.

⁹⁷ "XIII. internationale Orientalisten Kongress," *Hamburgischer Correspondent* 421 (9 September 1902); *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 195–96.

⁹⁸ Enno Littmann to Ignaz Goldziher, 23 August 1902, GIL/25/46/36, OC – MTA; *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 271–74; Enno Littmann to Friedrich Rosen, 23 March 1902, 1901–5, ASWPC; L. Hanisch, *Briefwechsel Goldziher und Hartmann*, 198; Tafla, *Ethiopia and Germany*, 23.

Henry Barclay Swete at Cambridge. Eberhard Nestle's report on the publication was received enthusiastically by all around. At the suggestion of the Baltimore scholar Paul Haupt a committee formed that would compile suggestions and advice for the Cambridge scholar working on the edition from qualified scholars abroad – mostly Germans. A resolution was passed to the effect.⁹⁹ Next to a whole lot of talks on Bible topics, there was also a lecture by Rabbi Grunwald of the conservative local Neue Dammtor synagogue. He gave a detailed account of the Jewish population in Hamburg going back to the arrival of Portuguese Jews after the Iberian inquisition. There had been discussions whether the Sephardim (Jews from Iberia and the Maghreb) had been in fact the first Jews in the city, if they had settled first in Amsterdam and then opened a branch community in the northern German city, or whether Ashkenazi (Central European) Jews were in Hamburg first. Himself from Silesia, Grunwald showed that it had been the Portuguese first, and then traced all significant influences and personalities among Hamburg's Jewish community into the eighteenth century. At the time Ashkenazi Jewish communities often sought out a Sephardic heritage of Islamic Spain's golden age.¹⁰⁰

In line with the self-perception of the organisers of the congress, Grunwald's presentation was positively received in the press. Behrmann had started his history of Hamburg's Orientalistik with the arrival of the Portuguese Jews, who had initiated Oriental studies in Hamburg. This was symbolically captured in the image of a Jewish savant studying a book on the silver medal that everyone was wearing around their necks. Next to Grunwald and Ballin there were a number of other Jews in the organising committee. Although historic anti-Judaism was not uncommon in Hamburg, Ferguson noted that along assimilation in the nineteenth century also "came the acceptance of Jews not only as commercial and professional partners, but also as officials in associational life, public administration, and friends in social life." Despite a "latent anti-Semitic feeling" in Hamburg remarked upon by Max Warburg, neither Mönckeberg nor Behrmann were known as anti-Semitic, as Rohde has noted. The Orient within was cherished and in the absence of much else in the way of Oriental studies, the city's Jewish history served the city well.¹⁰¹

99 *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 243–47; "XIII. internationaler Orientalisten-Kongress," *Hamburger Nachrichten* 211 (8 September 1902).

100 *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 277–79.

101 Georg Behrmann, *Hamburgs Orientalisten*, 2–8; "XIII. internationaler Orientalisten-Kongress," *Hamburger Nachrichten* 412 (9 September 1902); Ferguson, *Paper and Iron*, 61; Rohde, "400 Jahre Orientalistik/Hebraistik in Hamburg"; Davidson Kalmar and Penslar, "Introduction," xiii.

Another issue broached by the Semitic section was the issue of the Baghdad railway constructions that had just gotten underway. Surely, the scholars thought, during the digging of the railway tracks many antiquities would be unearthed, and feared that the workers and engineers constructing the railway would not be adequately equipped or educated to handle archaeological artefacts with the needed care. Excavating opportunities for themselves would be nice too.¹⁰² The Hamburg-born French Assyrologist Julius Oppert wanted to internationalise these efforts by assigning a commission to the railway company, which was, however, after “short and stormy debate” turned down. A lengthy resolution that was passed instead only recommended that the railway company should avail itself of specialists. The resolution was of little effect, as stones from Mshatta were initially used for gravel of the Hejaz railway tracks – a branch of the Bagdadbahn.¹⁰³

The Islamic section, presided over by the omnipresent Goldziher, saw its most publicly received lecture in the plenary. The Egyptian Zeki Bey argued that the invention of gun-powder was “indebted to the German genius”. Although not at the congress for the first time, Zeki Bey’s talk went over time and had to be cut short and the scholars there present did not agree with his hypothesis. Zeki Bey’s report about the new printing machines taken into operation under the auspices of the Egyptian government found more approval.¹⁰⁴ A number of talks in the section were concerned with the Arabic language. Like in the other sections many reports only announced forthcoming publications. Merx talked about the introduction of Aristotelian ethics into Arabic philosophy. The Prague-based Max Grünert presented what language courses in Arabic and other Oriental languages were now on offer for students, scholars and merchants in his home city. Lebedeva spoke about the rights of women in the Muslim world, as she had already done at Rome and building on her 1900 publication *Ob emantsipatsii musulmanskoj zhenshchiny* (On the Emancipation of Muslim Women).¹⁰⁵ Now she found that Egypt was the most emancipated Muslim country. British influence was good for women’s rights, but in particular, she argued, the efforts of Egyptians themselves were improving the lot of her sex. Both government and religious (male) figures stood at the forefront of this modernisation process. Lebedeva asked the committee to endorse the legal changes to improve the status of women that were in the process of being drawn up in a show of sup-

102 Peter Heigl, *Schotter für die Wüste. Die Bagdadbahn und ihre deutschen Bauingenieure*. (Regensburg: Selbstverlag, 2004), 116.

103 “XIII. internationaler Orientalisten-Kongress.”

104 *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 285–89.

105 Olcay, “Olga Lebedeva,” 60.

port. After a long discussion, Goldziher concluded that the question “cannot be answered absolutely. The position of women in Islamic society appears depending on historical ethnographic antecedents and historical influences in varying cultural circles... Concerning the specifics of the question of women, it would not be hard to put together from the literature of the hadith contradictory views” to those presented by Lebedeva. Thus, no resolution was passed on the non-philological matter. Goldziher was not going to belittle Islam for women’s rights just like that.¹⁰⁶ At the close of the Semitic section, Haupt motioned that the Semitic and Islamic sections should in future congresses no longer clash in scheduling. His resolution was adopted. Enough scholars saw a need to see the two sections together to satisfy their overarching research interests or be inspired by findings from neighbouring fields.¹⁰⁷

2.8 The Governments Pay Their Respect to the Orientalist Savants

Head of the Orient desk of the German foreign ministry, published Orientalist and standing in favour of the Orientally inclined Kaiser, Rosen was the obvious choice for representing the German government at the congress. As outlined above, rather than sharply representative of nation-states, delegations were mixed. Some representatives were very much part of the world of Oriental studies, others were in the domain of academic lobbying, or foreign affairs proper. The varied blend of the governments’ delegations found reflection in the speeches delivered in the opening and closing sessions of the congress in Hamburg. These speeches usually combined three key elements: the narrative of the represented government; the Orient and/or Oriental studies; and the hosting city of Hamburg.

By virtue of representing the German Reich, Rosen’s speech in the opening plenary session on September 5 came first. In a nod to combining German federalism and nationalism, Rosen pointed out that the “high senate of the free and Hansa city Hamburg had expressed the wish that a delegate of the German Reich was to be sent”, which the chancellor had answered by sending Rosen, who had been given the “honourable task” of welcoming foreign delegates on “German ground”. This was followed by a description of the extraordinary suitability of Hamburg for the congress, as the city stood in “constant contact with the entire

¹⁰⁶ *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 314–19; L. Hanisch, *Briefwechsel Goldziher und Hartmann*; Heschel, *Jüdischer Islam*, 65; Heschel, “Jewish Readings of the Qur’an,” 194.

¹⁰⁷ *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 282.

world". Material gain that had sparked these contacts was not all important, Rosen opined, as Hamburg belonged to Germany and "it is German nature, that next to material interests, the ideational is never neglected." This suitability Rosen outlined along the history of Oriental studies in Hamburg, basing himself on the history written by Behrmann and going back to its early Jewish studies. This Hamburg blend of trade and scholarship Rosen found encapsulated in Germany's national poet of the day, Friedrich Schiller: "Euch, ihr Götter, gehört der Kaufmann. Güter zu suchen geht er, doch an sein Schiff knüpft das Gute sich an." This "good" was the acquisition of knowledge and the exchange of culture, which Schiller had connected with the Phoenicians in the old Orient and around the Mediterranean. Blinding out imperial politics and conquest, in modern times, Rosen observed that Oriental studies had "discovered the kinship of the Indo-Germanic language family" in the wake of the merchants that went ahead.¹⁰⁸

Other representatives were equally mellifluous. The Austrian Leo Reinisch took particular pride in his country delegating so many Orientalists to Hamburg, which demonstrated his government's commitment to the study of the Orient. Johann Krsmárik for the Hungarian government extolled that his country "which only shortly before [in 1896] had celebrated its thousand year commemoration of its arrival from the Orient in the Occident, enjoys with every right an increasing reputation as an Oriental people in the midst of the state-fabric of Europe." Krsmárik did not fail to point out that German culture had been emulated by Hungary. His country was a bridge between Orient and Occident, and as such the Hungarians "waved their flags" to the city of Hamburg, which was equally connecting "Oriental and Occidental ideas".¹⁰⁹ Gubernatis for the Italian government was told to "parli in Italiano", as a number of members could not understand his French. The doyen of Italian Orientalism, who had been initiated as a Brahman in India in recognition of his profound knowledge of Hinduism, spoke of Hamburg as following the Italian harbour cities of Amalfi, Pisa,

108 In Edward Bulwer-Lytton's translation: "To you, ye gods, belong the merchant! – o'er the waves his sails the wide world's goods explore; and, all the while, wherever waft the gales the wide world's good sails with him as he sails!" *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 416.

109 *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 418–19; Tímea Galambos, "Magyarisches Millennium 1896. Glanz- und Schattenseiten der ungarischen Tausendjahrfeier," Diplomarbeit (Universität Wien, 2008), 1–97; Bálint Varga, *The Monumental Nation. Magyar Nationalism and Symbolic Politics in Fin-de-Siècle Hungary* (New York: Berghahn, 2016), 2.

Genoa and Venice in connecting through trade to the Orient – whence emanated the light.¹¹⁰

Lyall for the Indian government outlined soberly that his government had always partaken in the congresses, that India may be considered as the most important subject of investigation of the congress and that his government intended to continue its support of research.¹¹¹ Henri Cordier emphasised the French government's contributions to oriental studies by creating professorships and financing expeditions to Central Asia, Indo-China and Persia and greeted the "great and beautiful city of Hamburg".¹¹² For Russia, Nauphal spoke of his government's commitment to the continuation of scholarly exploration in "the antique domain of the Orient". In Nauphal's view, the Orient was a constitutive element of Russian history due to Russia's immediate contact with the Orient. However, Russia also owed much to its Occidental qualities and "particularly German science" for its enlightenment. Neither Russia which had had the fortune of being influenced by the outside nor those who had been fortunate to influence Russia should forget this.¹¹³

Amid the absence of a government representative, Maurice Bloomfield of Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore spoke on behalf of the US academies and found a "growing intellectual and material unity of the United States". Much of its intellectual advance had come through the harbours of Hamburg and Bremen, and he dwelled on "the debt which American Orientalists owe to German Orientalism: there is no American Orientalist of note who has not directly or indirectly drawn nurture from Germany." On another occasion at Hamburg, Bloomfield noted to much applause that "we American Orientalists have suckled ourselves big on the breasts of the German Orientalists."¹¹⁴ Thomsen from the University of Copenhagen outlined the good neighbourly relations of Denmark and Hamburg. Altona, a separate city a few minutes down the road from where the congress was held in St. Pauli, had been Danish until the German-Danish war in 1864; a sizable Danish minority still resided in the city and German-Danish scholarly relations had been of long-standing benefit to

110 *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 419; Osterhammel, *Verwandlung der Welt*, 404–12; Filipa Lowndes Vicente, *Other Orientalism. India between Florence and Bombay, 1860–1900*, Stewart Lloyd-Jones (Hyderabad: Orient BlackSwan, 2012), 1; Lowndes Vicente, "Orientalism on the Margins," 13–14.

111 *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 421.

112 *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 422–23.

113 *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 423.

114 *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 424; "Orientalisten Kongress in Hamburg," *Der Deutsche Correspondent* (Baltimore) 62 (9 September 1902): 1.

both scholarly communities.¹¹⁵ Zeki Bey held a lengthy speech about the friendship that existed between the Egyptian sultan Malik al-Kamil and the German emperor Friedrich II in the thirteenth century, who shared a sense of “tolerance and enlightenment, equally inspired by the high sentiments of humanity[...] pursued above all the true interests of their people and thus finished the horrors of war[...] The two masters of the Orient and the Occident[...] had the conscience of accomplishing an œuvre of capital importance for all of humanity.” Similarly good relations once again flourished after the reign of Wilhelm II. During his visit to the Ottoman Empire in 1898, the German Kaiser had evoked Malik al-Kamil and Zeki Bey had apparently listened attentively. Malik al-Kamil was Egyptian after all.¹¹⁶

The speeches of the delegates of Iran and China only followed during the second plenary session on 10 September. Nadjin of the Chinese legation in Berlin noted that Oriental studies were still not very advanced in China, but that this would surely change with intensifying contacts with the Europeans.¹¹⁷ The Iranian delegate Hovhannes Khan emphasised the Persian government’s “sympathy and gratitude” to the Orientalists. Thanks to their “systematic investigation” and Occidental science “the glorious past of Persia was revived” and legends were dispelled. Khan pointed out that Orientalists could also be glad to learn more about Persian poetry, invoking Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and the inspiration he drew from Hafez for his *West-Östlichen Divan*. Khan hoped that in the future even more scholars would come to Iran.¹¹⁸

The out-of-townners had been preceded in speechifying by the president of the congress Behrmann and Hamburg’s first mayor Mönckeberg. Both of them went to lengths to portray Hamburg as a city worthy of the honour of hosting such a congress, while buckling before its elevated predecessors. Behrmann explained how it came that a “circle of local men” had attempted to hold such “an important gathering of men of science”.¹¹⁹ Mönckeberg emphasised the city’s long-standing relations with all the places that scholars of the Orient investigat-

115 *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 424; Berge, *Verschwundene Länder*, 33.

116 *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 434; Mangold-Will, “Hohenzollernsche Universalmonarchie zwischen Orient und Okzident,” 56–57.

117 *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 434.

118 Hovhannes Khan and Rosen entertained a working relationship. Khan helped Rosen with proofreading some of his later Persian publications. *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 434–36; Vardanyan, “Johannes Masehyan [in Armenian],” 228–31; Georg Rosen and Friedrich Rosen, *Elementa Persica. Persische Erzählungen mit kurzer Grammatik und Glossar* (Leipzig: Veith, 1915), VI.

119 *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 404.

ed.¹²⁰ Behrmann brought up the sore issue of the botched participant cards and apologised by quoting in Arabic and then in German a saying of the twelfth century Baghdad scholar Ibn al-Jawzi “‘forgive the layman (jahil) seventy times more than the sage (‘alimi)’, and you as the ‘ulema have come to us as the layman.”¹²¹

High-flown and politically calculated as many of these speeches were, the desire to please on the public stage broadly portrayed the purpose the different governments attached to supporting Oriental studies and their participation in Hamburg’s congress. The grand stage of the speakers also revealed some of the power-dynamics at play at the 1902 congress. France focussed on the non-controversial, Hungary blew itself out of proportion as the bridge between Orient and Occident, Russia emphasised its natural closeness to the Orient to which it felt itself to belong in a way, while owing its advances to the west, and Great Britain saw no reason to be present, as its colonies could take on the job. Germany – in the shape of Rosen – was busy with itself, trade and an Indo-Germanic past. Hamburg really wanted its university and with its dilettantism it had also demonstrated why it needed one. Under British tutelage Egypt focussed on a historic friendship with Germany in the Middle Ages, hoping that Egypt might benefit from Germany’s assistance in modern times. China, a year after the Boxer Rebellion, was late and somewhat unsure of what was going on, whereas Persia, squeezed by Russia from the north and Great Britain from the south, saw its remedy bringing in yet more foreigners in an attempt at nation-building through accurate scholarship and rediscovering the country’s historic greatness. The awkward membership cards went under in the excitement over what revelations the congress held, which scholarly alliances might be brokered and of course in the expectation of enlightening discussions.

2.9 The Orient Glorifies the Alster Mermaid

There was more going on at the congress outside the fora of sober science and political grandstanding. After the “terribly crowded” official reception in Hamburg’s townhall, the city theatre put on show Wagner’s *Valkyre* (Smith-Lewis’ verdict: “magnificent”), and the day after the eight hundred participants went on two steamships of the Hamburg-Amerika-Linie up to Cuxhaven and the newly inaugurated Kaiser-Wilhelm-Kanal. “Here Mohammedans and Germans en-

120 *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 411.

121 *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 409.

counter in the proud national realisation of owning the most imposing canals in the world – with the mental distinction: hither Suez, hither Brunsbüttel!” the journalist of the *Hamburgischer Correspondent* informed his readers. Despite the sunshine it was rather cold that day and Indologists huddled around a chimney while discussing the Sanskrit *Rigveda*. Others “parleyed in an exotic vernacular, took notes and even held lectures.” The journalist had a good time, observing how “delightful it was, when an Armenian tried for a quarter of an hour to explain to a Japanese in French that the Elbe is a beautiful river.”¹²² In one corner on deck the Iranists gathered. Andreas introduced Rosen to the foremost British authority Browne, who had several years before reviewed Rosen’s *Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar* and now wanted to test Rosen: did he really know how to speak Persian?¹²³ All the while a music ensemble played jolly tunes, the greetings from passing ships added to the high spirits, and so did the waving of white handkerchiefs by onlookers and the fireworks on the way back to Hamburg. A woman on the wayside in Cuxhaven had not grasped that there was a difference between Orientals and Orientalists, commenting to much amusement “but some do speak German quite decently!”¹²⁴

The greatest public display of the congress was on 9 September, when the Orientalists had gathered for a festive dinner in the restaurant Alsterlust on the shore of the Binnenalster – an arm of the Elbe. The Kaiser-Wilhelm fountain in the middle of the Alster was illuminated, on the opposite shore a spotlight shone into the sky, Bengal fires were lit all around, creating “magical light”, and on the water the rowing clubs of the city put on a “most beautiful” show to the music of a military band. The crews of the boats were dressed as Chinese, Turks and Bedouins, or as what was thought they would dress like. The boats were equipped with exotic umbrellas or palm trees and formed a pageant, adulating in its middle a woman dressed as mermaid, the “Alster mermaid”. The culmination was the landing of the procession at the jetty of the restaurant, when the Alster mermaid delivered a greeting poem to the guests that “surpassed anything Venice has to offer”, Smith-Lewis thought.¹²⁵

122 “XIII. internationaler Orientalisten Kongress in Hamburg,” *Hamburgischer Correspondent* 420 (8 September 1902).

123 Browne, “Review: Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar”; Friedrich Rosen, “Erinnerungen an Edward G. Browne †5. January 1926,” *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung* 29, no. 10 (1926): 878.

124 “XIII. internationaler Orientalisten Kongress in Hamburg.”

125 “XIII. internationaler Orientalisten-Kongress,” *Hamburgischer Correspondent* 423 (10 September 1902); *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 522; Smith Lewis, “What I Saw at the Orientalist Congress,” 96.

There was also more fun and talk. Rumour had it that in a cafe near the Alster river a “*séance de nuit*” was held, where the chief speeches and speakers of the Congress were very wittily parodied.¹²⁶ At the reform synagogue Israelitischer Tempel, Rabbi Leimdörfer held a speech about the greatest gift of the Orient to the Occident, “the Bible, the word of God, planting heaven on earth, the heaven of monotheism, all-embracing love and the prophetic belief in the messiah and its idea of world peace”, which enthused the reporting journalist so much that he wrote for his readers that the Hamburg congress really had kindled the hope of “reaching this Biblical-prophetic end goal, the unification of all to the highest divine awareness, to the purest virtue and the richest love.”¹²⁷

This was not the only ritualistic invocation that spoke to the “holiness of Oriental studies”. The last night of the congress saw the Orientalists hosted for a last party in the restaurant of the zoological garden. Known in the city for its delicacies, the men and women were served Westmoreland soup, English turbot, veal tenderloins garni à la Piedemontaise, lobster from newly German Heligoland, vol-au-vent, young partridge, ice cream and many more delicacies.¹²⁸ After mayor Mönckeberg dwelled on the significance of the German Kaiser maintaining peace and on the greatness of all the countries from which the Orientalists had come to Hamburg, came the moment of Gubernatis, who had presided over the previous congress in Rome. Raising a goblet into the air, first donated by Oscar II of Sweden at the congress in Stockholm in 1889, Gubernatis exclaimed that it symbolised “the immortality of the congress of Orientalists”. Handing the goblet to Behrmann, Gubernatis elaborated that it was from this “cup of Ambrosia [the eternal youth nectar drunk by the Olympian gods] of the king of Sweden that the congresses of the Orientalists shall draw new vigor, and impulse for greater endeavours.” Gubernatis’ speech, an Orientalist tour de force, is too long to quote in its entirety. Suffice to say that it was a rallying cry to scholarly salvation – just that he once again did not speak clearly enough, his speech being drowned out by the chatter of the savants.¹²⁹

It did not matter. Hamburg was a great success. The city delighted the Orientalists with its excellent preparation, and was favourably compared to the two

126 Smith Lewis, “What I Saw at the Orientalist Congress,” 94.

127 “XIII. internationale Orientalisten Kongress.”

128 Robert Irwin, *For Lust of Knowing: The Orientalists and Their Enemies* (London: Allen Lane, 2006), 82; “XIII. internationaler Orientalisten-Kongress,” *Hamburger Nachrichten* 214 (11 September 1902); “XIII. internationaler Orientalisten-Kongress,” *Hamburgischer Correspondent* 426 (11 September 1902); Rüger, *Heligoland*, 98.

129 “XIII. internationaler Orientalisten-Kongress”; *Verhandlungen des XIII. Orientalisten-Kongresses*, 438–39.

preceding congresses in Rome and Paris, which had apparently been a lot more chaotic. Smith-Lewis could not but make use of the stereotype of superior German organisation, mirroring the “Tüchtigkeit” (prowess) that Kautzsch had promised in Rome.¹³⁰ The city had also reached its goal of creating a favourable disposition to scholarship internally, which journalists time and again had reason to describe as “practical” and far from “weltfremd” (quixotic).¹³¹ Even if in the immediate aftermath the plans of Melle and his university proponents were rejected in the senate, the city saw the foundation of its Colonial Institute in 1908. More adequately “practical”, the institute would come to play a significant role in the last years of Germany’s colonial empire and interactions with the Orient. In the aftermath of the war it fell to the Social Democrats, who had cared little about the bourgeois venture of the Orientalist Congress, to found the first democratic university in the Weimar Republic.¹³²

More immediately, the city’s library benefited from all the publications visiting scholars deposited. The spirits of a number of Hamburgers were lifted, either by sitting in on the congress or by reading Hamburg’s newspapers. The expenditure of public funds was justified.¹³³ If all scholars and foreign representatives who came to Hamburg were equally satisfied is difficult to estimate. The Japanese delegates were probably disappointed that Tokyo was not chosen for the next session. Lebedeva’s fight for women’s rights was also not entertained as she had hoped, and the Baghdad railway would not be scientifically supervised. However, those dabbling in Central Asian affairs were rather elated. As were Bible scholars, and a number of individual scholars from far and wide, like Andreas, whose talks put him back into business, Kégl, who got to know his peers

130 Smith Lewis, “What I Saw at the Orientalist Congress,” 93–94; *Actes du douzième Congrès des orientalistes*, CCLIX.

131 “XIII. internationaler Orientalisten-Kongress,” *Hamburger Nachrichten* 213 (10 September 1902).

132 The congress was an entirely bourgeois affair. The social democratic newspaper *Hamburger Echo* only dedicated a couple of lines to the congress on the day of its opening. “Beilage,” *Hamburger Echo* 208 (6 September 1902); Becker, “Behrmann und die Orientalistik”; Werner von Melle, “Senior Behrmann und die Wissenschaft in Hamburg,” in *Senior D. Georg Behrmann, seine Persönlichkeit und sein Wirken*. (Hamburg: Alfred Janssen, 1916), 282; von Melle, *Dreißig Jahre Hamburger Wissenschaft. 1891–1921. Rückblicke und persönliche Erinnerungen*, 317–20; Ferguson, *Paper and Iron*, 69–77.

133 “XIII. internationaler Orientalisten-Kongress”; “XIII. internationaler Orientalisten-Kongress”; “Nachklang zum XIII. Orientalisten-Kongress in Hamburg”; *Actes du douzième Congrès des orientalistes*, LXXII–CIV; Robert Münzel to Johann Heinrich Burchard, 15 June 1905, 132–II 874, StAH; Senior G. Behrmann to Johann Heinrich Burchard, 2 October 1908, 132–II 874, StAH.



Fig. 5.2. Orientalist scholars greet Edward Denison Ross in Calcutta on 9 September 1902 with a postcard issued specially for Hamburg's Orientalist Congress.

in Persian studies, or Smith-Lewis, who used the chance to exchange ideas with her German colleagues. The congress had given a venue for the presentation of research and served as a space where scholars could toss around ideas, argue and come up with new plans for future scholarship. The political and peer backing the congress offered would further spawn research and exploration. For that matter, the congress was rather eventful for Friedrich Rosen as well. His speech was widely printed in Hamburg's newspapers and warmly received.¹³⁴ He had arranged for his friend Andreas to make an impression and witnessed his success. Finally, Rosen could follow up on what Iranists and other scholars had been up to and tend to his scholarly relationships. The diplomat Rosen travelled to Hamburg in a political capacity, but there he had a place among the scholars of the day. Sending a postcard from the congress to their colleague in Calcutta Denison Ross, Rosen signed his name next to that of Browne, Nöldeke, Frederick William Thomas, Marc Aurel Stein, and Clément Huart – a who's who of Orientalism.¹³⁵

3 Posturing and Collaboration at the Fifteenth International Orientalist Congress in Copenhagen in 1908

Even though he had been announced German representative at the fourteenth International Orientalist Congress in Algiers scheduled in the spring of 1905, Rosen's diplomatic mission to Ethiopia at the same time precluded his participation.¹³⁶ Instead of Rosen the German delegation was led by the long-time consul in the Ottoman empire Paul von Tischendorf and the archaeologist with political ambitions from Cairo, Max von Oppenheim. Just like in Hamburg, the location was determinative of some of the congress' embedding. Hosted by the French colonial government, the congress was meant to bolster the French civilising mission in North Africa, while emphasising that Algiers itself was a modern French city on the southern shore of a *mare nostrum* in the tradition of the Roman Empire. Local participation was strong, which included in equal parts French colonialists and Algerians. Judging from the latter's sometimes very openly critical interjections in the general assembly, this was not an entirely harmonious gathering. French participation was large, but the Germans were still omnipresent. The German governmental delegation with fourteen men was twice as

134 "XIII. internationale Orientalisten Kongress in Hamburg," *Hamburgischer Correspondent* 416 (5 September 1902).

135 Edward Granville Browne, Friedrich Rosen, Frederick William Thomas, et al. to Edward Denison Ross, 9 September 1902, postcard, 41, PP MS 8 / Ross Collection, SOASA.

136 Bernhard von Bülow to Hamburg Senate, 20 February 1905, 132–II 874, StAH.

large as that of France, if not counting the five representatives from French colonies.¹³⁷ As the political situation in Morocco was coming to a head and skirmishes on the Algerian-Moroccan border had caused the immediate escalation of the First Morocco Crisis that year, Oppenheim used the opportunity of his stay at the congress to study the population, geography and French military installations along Algeria's western border region. Like on other occasions, his lengthy memorandum appears to have been ignored by the *Auswärtiges Amt*.¹³⁸

In 1908 the lead of the delegation to Copenhagen fell again to Rosen. Rosen's stature had risen in the six years since Hamburg. He had become a personality with considerable international name recognition after his mission to Ethiopia and due to querulous Moroccan affairs. For Rosen an extension of his European summer holiday in Copenhagen and discussing sublime matters of language, history, religion and philosophy with fellow Orientalists was a welcome change of tune from scheming in Morocco. When Rosen arrived in Copenhagen, he found that the city had prepared a program of similar proportions to those found at the previous congresses. Copenhagen's Tivoli gardens were lid up for the Orientalists, who could amuse themselves free of charge. The tramway company of Copenhagen offered rides at no cost. An excursion to the royal castle at Marienlyst and the neighbouring grave of Shakespeare's Hamlet was arranged. The public works ministry provided two trains, the shipping company *Det Forenede Dampskibs-Selskab* a yacht. The beer brewers of Carlsberg were throwing parties. The Danish king was there and the two crown princes as well.¹³⁹ Like in Hamburg, the local context of Denmark's geography, politics, imperial history and its scene of Orientalist scholarship shaped the way the congress was organised and carried out. Just as important were continuities and new discoveries of Orientalist scholarship and the larger developments of international politics. With his elevated status on the international scene, Rosen was at the centre of a number of these crucial events of the congress. At the same time his political disillusionment motivated his own personal scholarly contribution to the congress, which would solidify German-Danish scholarly collaboration.

137 Bernhard von Bülow to Hamburg Senate, 20 February 1905, 132–II 874, StAH; *Actes du XIV^e Congrès des orientalistes*, 12–14, 38–39, 85; Monique Dondin-Payre, "Akteure und Modalitäten der französischen Archäologie in Nordafrika," in *Das große Spiel. Archäologie und Politik zur Zeit des Kolonialismus (1860–1940)*, Charlotte Trümpler (Essen: Ruhr Museum, 2008), 59.

138 Max von Oppenheim, *Denkschrift ueber das Algerisch-Marokkanische Grenzgebiet*, 1 February 1906, R 15648, PA AA.

139 *Actes du quinzième Congrès des orientalistes*, 44; Christian Sarauw, *Congrès international des orientalistes. Quinzième session. Report Number 3* (Copenhagen, 1 May 1908).

3.1 Denmark's Orient

Denmark's history of colonialisation started in the thirteenth century when a Danish duchy was established on the Estonian coast. Iceland, the Faroe Islands, Greenland, and Norway were acquired in the late fourteenth century and Denmark's seafaring led Danish trading companies to establish outposts in the West Indies, on the coast of the Indian subcontinent in Tamil Tharangambadi and at Bengali Serampore in the seventeenth century and on the Nicobar Islands in the eastern Indian Ocean in the eighteenth century.¹⁴⁰ Amid the growing power of the British and French Empires and the abrogation of slavery making Danish plantations unprofitable, Denmark gave up or sold most of its colonies below the equator by the middle of the nineteenth century. With the loss of predominantly German Schleswig and Holstein in 1864, Denmark no longer conceived of itself as an empire and a conglomeration of different ethnicities but as nation-state.¹⁴¹

With trade and acolonial acquisitions had come explorations of the unknown. Most salient was the Danish Arabian Expedition from 1761 to 1767. A team of four scholars, a painter and an orderly travelled via the Mediterranean, the Red Sea and Arabia towards Western India and back via Iran and the Ottoman Empire. Only the Cuxhaven-born mathematician and cartographer Carsten Niebuhr returned to Copenhagen. The copies Niebuhr made of the cuneiform inscriptions at Cyrus' palace at Persepolis would lead in the years to come to the first decipherment of cuneiform by the philologist Georg Friedrich Grotefend of Göttingen, and proved widely influential in German imaginations of the East. Niebuhr's maps of the Red Sea facilitated trade between the Indian Ocean and Suez, and he brought a number of botanical and other findings to Copenhagen.¹⁴² Like neighbouring Hamburg, Denmark interacted with cultures and peo-

140 Ole Feldbæk, "The Danish Trading Companies of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," *Scandinavian Economic History Review* 34, no. 3 (1986): 204–18; Daniel Jeyaraj, *Bartholomäus Ziegenbalg, the Father of Modern Protestant Mission: An Indian Assessment* (Delhi: Indian Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2006).

141 Berge, *Verschwundene Länder*, 36–38; Christian Egander Skov, "Radical Conservatism and Danish Imperialism. The Empire Built 'Anew from Scratch'," *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 8, no. 1 (2013): 68–70; Michael Bregnsbo, "Einheitsstaat statt Konglomeratsstaat. Dänische und deutsche Identitätsmuster im Dänemark des 18. Jahrhunderts," in *Carsten Niebuhr (1733–1815) und seine Zeit*, Josef Wiesehöfer and Stephan Conermann (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2002), 50–55.

142 Stig T. Rasmussen, "The Arabian Journey 1761–1767," in *Royal Danish Library Online*. <http://www.kb.dk/en/nb/samling/os/naeroest/cneksp.html>; Thorkild Hansen and Colin Thubron, *Arabia Felix. The Danish Expedition of 1761–1767*, James McFarlane and Kathleen McFarlane (New

ples far and wide often in trade contexts, but when Denmark's imperial possessions away from Scandinavia were contracting around 1800, the Orient was re-discovered through critical scholarship and romanticism. The linguist Rasmus Rask had by 1818 come to the conclusion that the Old Norse languages, from which Icelandic stemmed, had the same origins as the Baltic, Romance and Slavic languages, but not the Finno-Ugric languages and argued that they all belonged to one language family: Indo-European. When Rask's findings were criticised as not taking into account Sanskrit, he travelled via Persia to India, bringing back volumes of manuscripts in Persian, Pali and Sinhalese. Rask's work constituted the basis of comparative linguistics, on which scholars like the German Sanskritist Franz Bopp and the philologist and mythologist Jacob Grimm extrapolated.¹⁴³

A fascination with the Orient spread at the same time in public culture. As Oxfeldt maintains, Danish nation-making was largely influenced by identifying with a cosmopolitan Orient imported through France in opposition to an in power and size expanding Germany to its south. The Tivoli gardens, constructed in 1843 on order of the Danish royal house to entertain the masses, held a number of attractions emulating Grenada's Alhambra, Chinese pavilions or Indian temples and "with its roller-coaster, its merry-go-round and its bazaar marked the transition into modernity" while at the same time "epitom[ising] Danish culture".¹⁴⁴ The appeal of the Orient in popular culture was equally reflected by the country's foremost beer company Carlsberg, which had the entrance to its factory flanked by four imposing granite elephants. Carl Jacobsen, the owner of the company, had a thing for the ancient Indian swastika and had the Carlsberg beer bot-

York: New York Review Books, 2017), 316–24; Polaschegg, *Der andere Orientalismus*, 162–63; Irwin, *Lust of Knowing*, 103; Berman, *German Literature on the Middle East*, 125.

143 Martin Zerlang, "Danish Orientalism," *Current Writing* 18, no. 2 (2006): 123–24; "Rasmus Rask," in *Encyclopædia Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Rasmus-Rask>; Vibeke Winge, "Rasmus Rask," in *Den Store Danske, Gyldendal*. <http://denstoredanske.dk/index.php?sideId=148764>.

144 Claus Valling Pedersen, Personal communication, 17 June 2015; Axel Breidahl, *Tivoli-Sæsonen 1900. I billeder og tekst* (Copenhagen: Sophus Krucko & C. Andreasen, 1900), 10–12; "About Tivoli," in *Tivoli*. <https://www.tivoli.dk/en/om/tivolis+historie>; Martin Zerlang, "Orientalism and Modernity: Tivoli in Copenhagen," *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 20 (1997): 81; Zerlang, "Danish Orientalism," 131; Elisabeth Oxfeldt, "Orientalism on the Periphery: The Cosmopolitan Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Danish and Norwegian Literature and Culture" (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2002), 1, 44.

tles decorated with the symbol. Standing for prosperity and well-being in Hinduism, the symbols were removed from bottles in the 1930s.¹⁴⁵

Like their founding father Rask and colleagues elsewhere in Europe, Denmark's Orientalists, all at the University of Copenhagen, were foremost philologists. First among them at the turn of the century was Vilhelm Thomsen. Born in 1842, Thomsen had studied philology in Copenhagen and become first fascinated by the Magyar language. From Hungarian, Thomsen moved on to its Finno-Ugric cousin Finnish, and spent some time in Finland to study Teutonic loanwords in the language. Thomsen also studied Swedish loanwords in the Russian language. Later Thomsen moved to deciphering the Chinese and Old-Turkic inscriptions on the Orkhon stones of the eighth century, which related the legendary origins of the Turks and had been found by the Russian explorer Vasily Radlov in southern Siberia in 1889. Thomsen's decrypting of the Old-Turkic script in the mid-1890s was hailed a great success and made the philologist a celebrated figure in Denmark and beyond. Thomsen, who had initially published his findings in French at Helsinki's Finno-Ugric society, became a corresponding member of the British Royal Asiatic Society, entertained correspondences in Hungarian and in other languages with scholars across Europe. In the Ottoman Empire his findings were published in the journal *İkdam* in 1907.¹⁴⁶

Thomsen was a distinguished figure among European philologists, as well as a frequent fixture at the International Orientalists Congresses going back to Paris in 1897.¹⁴⁷ Although he had not travelled to Algiers, he was the obvious choice for president of Copenhagen's congress. Next to Thomsen, there were a number of other scholars working on Oriental topics in Denmark – all part of the organising committee of the congress.¹⁴⁸ Danish Orientalists were dependent on a larger pool of fellow scholars than Denmark could offer, and many had been at some of the congresses before, studied in Germany or France, read

145 "Symbols on the Carlsberg Grounds," in *Carlsberg Group. About Us. Heritage*. <http://www.carlsberggroup.com/Company/heritage/architectureatCarlsberg/Pages/SymbolsOnTheCarlsbergGrounds.aspx>.

146 Konow, "Vilhelm Thomsen"; Hans Heinrich Schaeder, "Vilhelm Thomsen. 25. Januar 1842–13. Mai 1927. Ein Nachruf," *ZDMG* 81 (6), no. 3/4 (1927): 279–81; Carl Frederik Bricka, "Thomsen, Vilhelm Ludvig Peter, f. 1842, Sprogforsker," *Dansk Biografisk Lexikon* XVII (1903): 238–41; Nedjib Acem to Vilhelm Thomsen, 19 May 1907, 1 NKS 4291,4°, KB – HA.

147 Angelo de Gubernatis to Vilhelm Thomsen, 26 July 1899, 8 NKS 4291,4°, KB – HA; L. Borremann to Vilhelm Thomsen, 24 December 1902, 2 NKS 4291,4°, KB – HA; Paul Boyer to Vilhelm Thomsen, 29 July 1906, 2 NKS 4291,4°, KB – HA.

148 Sarauw, *Congrès international des orientalistes. Quinzième session. Report Number 3*; Arthur Christensen, *Registration Book – Congress*, 9 December 1907, Note, III 2 NKS 1927, KB – HA.

and were read by European colleagues, and would often publish their findings in French or German, rather than in the less accessible Danish.¹⁴⁹ The topics they covered, as behoved a good university, were as wide-ranging as that of the congresses. The colleagues of the comparative linguist Thomsen were the Semitist and scholar of Islam Frants Buhl, the Arabist Johannes Østrup, the Iranist Arthur Christensen, the Sanskritist Dines Andersen, the comparative linguist Christian Sarauw and the Egyptologist Valdemar Schmidt.

After Tiflis had been ruled out by the Algiers congress, Copenhagen was suggested by a number of Orientalists. Given the long-standing interactions of Danish Orientalists and considering that the capital of Copenhagen was a wealthy city, with the necessary resources and expertise for a successful congress, Copenhagen was quickly adopted. The recognition of Thomsen across philologist circles across Europe helped. Together with his fellow Orientalist scholars Thomsen garnered the support of local academics, the municipality, government and businesses to have the congress held under the auspices of the king and his two sons. Similar to Hamburg, congress preparations could feed on the appeal of the exotic and the enlightenment expected by the luminaries coming to the city. But the *Jyllandsposten* saw its expectations of plenty Oriental features disappointed, finding that only a few red fez, one white turban, and a “dark faced” couple from Sri Lanka were not enough.¹⁵⁰ Next to the dream Orient of the Tivoli that opened its doors to the congress members, the Glyptoteket of the Ny Carlsberg foundation also welcomed the Orientalists in its halls. The heir of the Carlsberg brewery, Carl Jacobsen, who liked to walk across town wearing a red fez, had across the street from the Tivoli created a public exhibition hall. Collections of busts and sculptures from the Greek and Roman world were complemented by modern creations exclusively made for him by Auguste Rodin and Edgar Degas, and mummies and other pharaonic artefacts from Egypt. The Egyptologist Valdemar Schmidt acted as Jacobsen’s scientific consultant. Swastikas adorned walls and floor-mosaics and in the middle of the building a winter garden housed palm trees and other plants from warmer climates.¹⁵¹

149 Arthur Christensen to Martin Hartmann, 16 June 1907, copy, I 1 Utilg. 578, KB – HA; Arthur Christensen to Santos, 8 September 1905, copy, I 1 Utilg. 578, KB – HA; Angelo de Gubernatis to Vilhelm Thomsen, 27 July 1908, 8 NKS 4291,4°, KB – HA.

150 Konow, “Vilhelm Thomsen,” 929; “Orientalisterne,” *Jyllandsposten* 218 (19 August 1908): 4.

151 Mogens Jørgensen and Anne Marie Nielsen, eds., *How It All Began. The Story of Carl Jacobsen’s Egyptian Collection 1884–1925*, Neil Martin Stanford (Copenhagen: Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, 2015), 56; Tine, “Petria at Glyptotek.”

The Orient was part of a modernist dream that drew from many sources of knowledge and was no longer merely an imagination.¹⁵² Introducing its readers to the Orientalist congress, the liberal newspaper *Berlingske* declared:

“We no longer live in the aesthetic age, when the Orient worked on us by its peculiar fantastic grace of fairy tales. In our days the development of the world is becoming more coherent, a more busily still working machinery; and in this complete mechanism the Orient, which in past days was the cradle of our culture, is being called to play a still greater role.”

The Orientalists coming to Copenhagen opened the Orient to Denmark and were building the bridges for the benefit of science and historical progress, *Berlingske* contended.¹⁵³ Little Denmark shone for a week in the glow of the Orientalist Congress, with its news being reported around the world.¹⁵⁴ Financing of the congress had already been assured in the summer of 1906. The Danish government had agreed to contribute 8,000 kroner, and a “wealthy private person” promised to cover the remaining costs.¹⁵⁵ In September 1908, Copenhagen was awaiting an extraordinary event. Six hundred international scholars would swarm its streets, some even dressed in ways unusual to the city. The newest findings from the latest Turfan expedition were to be presented, and the prestige attached to the congress would be associated with Copenhagen and Denmark. For the local Orientalists, the congress held the potential for creating scholarly relations with foreign colleagues from the dominant German, French and British Orientalist scenes, and to have the newest research presented at one’s own university was always a good thing.

3.2 Participants

A typographers strike in Copenhagen coincided with the beginning of the congress, preventing the compilation of the usual daily reports of the congresses. In response, a committee of scholars at the congress decided to publish signifi-

¹⁵² Zantop, *Colonial Fantasies*; Zerlang, “Danish Orientalism,” 124–31.

¹⁵³ “De 15de internationale Orientalistkongres,” *Berlingske Politiske Og Avertissements-Tidende (Morning Edition)* 187 (18 August 1908): 1.

¹⁵⁴ “King Calls Congress. Orientalists to Meet at Copenhagen in August,” *New York Tribune* 67 (1 January 1908): 7; Vilhelm Thomsen, *Congrès international des orientalistes. Quinzième session*, Report Number 2, 1907, ASWPC.

¹⁵⁵ Arthur Christensen to Martin Hartmann, 30 June 1906, copy, I 1 Utilg. 578, KB – HA; Vilhelm Thomsen, *Congrès international des orientalistes. Quinzième session. Août 1908*, May 1907, Report Number 1, ASWPC.

cantly slimmed down congress proceedings, which did not include the talks themselves or any discussions and participant information was less detailed. The local newspapers were equally affected by the strike but later Danish and foreign press provide insights into what went on at the congress.¹⁵⁶ The members of the organising committee had attended earlier International Orientalist Congresses and were familiar with its research fields and participants. The structure of the congress followed the tested ways of years before but there were significant variations. Larger still than in Algiers, the largest government delegation was that of Germany at twenty-two. In return for the travel bursary, they had been instructed to enter the congress in one block, with Rosen leading the pack. The French government had sent ten representatives, not counting colonial representatives. The US was present with four, Greece followed with three. All others, including Russia, Austria, Hungary, Turkey, Italy and China, had sent two or less representatives to Denmark. Egypt was not represented officially, neither were Iran or Japan. As before, Great Britain arrived only in the form of British India and Ceylon.¹⁵⁷

The profiles of these participants were again mixed. A large proportion were academics. Some were politically involved. The German delegation was next to Rosen accompanied by Max von Oppenheim as a second diplomat. The French had sent foreign and education ministry members, China its legation secretary in Paris, while Austria and Belgium were also politically represented. There were local Danes who took an interest, such as the chief Rabbi of Denmark, librarians, members of the city council, or merchants, often accompanied by wives or daughters. Among the one hundred and thirty-eight Germans thirty-nine were women, many of them were family of Orientalists, but there was also a countess from the German countryside, a student from Königsberg, and other single women, mostly from northern Germany.¹⁵⁸ At about 250 Marks the trip from Hamburg, accommodation and participation in the congress was relatively cheap, if compared to the over 1,500 Marks the same would have cost for Algiers.¹⁵⁹ Among the British Orientalists there was also significant marital company, probably also because shipping companies had agreed to transport congress members at reduced prices from Hull, Newcastle and Helsinki.¹⁶⁰ The organisers

156 “De 15de internationale Orientalistkongres”; *Actes du quinzième Congrès des orientalistes*, 79.

157 *Actes du quinzième Congrès des orientalistes*, 7–10.

158 *Actes du quinzième Congrès des orientalistes*, 16.

159 Robert Müntzel, Vorgetragen im Senat, 11 November 1908, 132–11 874, StAH; Robert Münzel to Johann Heinrich Burchard, 15 June 1905, 132–11 874, StAH.

160 *Actes du quinzième Congrès des orientalistes*, 23–26.

Table 5.3. Number of Registered Participants per Country – Copenhagen, 1908

| Country | Participants |
|--|--------------|
| Germany | 138 |
| Denmark | 90 |
| Great Britain | 72 |
| United States | 22 |
| Netherlands | 21 |
| France | 17 |
| Finland | 16 |
| Italy | 16 |
| Russia | 15 |
| Sweden | 13 |
| Austria | 9 |
| Hungary | 7 |
| Greece | 6 |
| Switzerland | 6 |
| Norway | 5 |
| Algeria, Belgium, China, Egypt, Japan, Spain, Syria, Tunisia | 4 or less |

Actes du quinzième Congrès international des orientalistes, 18–36

Table 5.4. Number of Representatives Delegated by Academic Institutions – Copenhagen, 1908

| Country | Representatives |
|--|-----------------|
| Great Britain | 60 |
| Germany | 20 |
| United States | 20 |
| France | 17 |
| Russia | 12 |
| Italy | 12 |
| Austria-Hungary | 9 |
| India | 7 |
| Finland | 5 |
| Switzerland | 5 |
| Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland | 4 or less |

Actes du quinzième Congrès international des orientalistes, 10–17.

had arranged for shipping discounts between North and Baltic Sea, contributing to a higher participation from Finland, Sweden, Great Britain and the Netherlands. The large number of German participants is equally explained by the geographic proximity and ease of access. Greek representation was up, because the

Greek delegation under Spyridon Lambros came to Denmark with the intention to invite the Orientalists to Athens for the next session. French participation was relatively low, but its colonies had following the congress in Algiers developed a presence. Perhaps in a bid to offset the lack of support by the government, British academic institutions had tripled their support for members to attend. The government of Iran was in the thralls of the Constitutional Revolution and had better things to do. Japan probably had enough of pandering to the West after defeating Russia and conquering Korea. The Egyptian government had already lost interest in Algiers.¹⁶¹

3.3 Sections and Themes

The basic section structure remained the same in Copenhagen. Indo-European linguistics had been expanded into comparative linguistics at large, including papers on Malay, Javanese, African linguistics, phonetics and, in a show of Denmark's Orient, a talk on "Eskimo numerals".¹⁶² The subsections India and Iran ran under the title "archaeology and languages of Aryan countries" and saw Charles Lyall present another volume of the linguistic survey of India, and other projects supported by the Indian government. A large number of talks on India concerned ancient Sanskrit and Prakrit. Amid discussions in German scholarship on ancient Buddhist-Christian relations and fashionable literary and philosophical comparisons of the characteristics of Jesus and Buddha, Gubernatis talked about Buddhism in the Orient before the emergence of Christianity.¹⁶³ Building on the support an international committee consisting of Kuhn, Schermann, T.W. Rhys Davids and A.V. Williams Jackson had garnered at Hamburg, Kuhn presented an update to the "Manual of Indo-Aryan Bibliography", which was expected to be published three years later.¹⁶⁴ The section head, Dines Andersen, showed the section around the university library's Indian manuscript collection, which still held the manuscripts that Carsten Niebuhr

161 Jürgen Osterhammel, *Die Flughöhe der Adler. Historische Essays zur globalen Gegenwart* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2017), 122.

162 *Actes du quinzième Congrès des orientalistes*, 45–48; William Thalbitzer, "The Eskimo Numerals, a Lecture Read before the XV. International Congress of Orientalists in the Section of Linguistics, Copenhagen 1908," *Journal de la Société Finno-Ougrienne* 25, no. 2 (1908): 1–25.

163 *Actes du quinzième Congrès des orientalistes*, 51; Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, 273–74; Robert Cowan, *The Indo-German Identification. Reconciling South Asian Origins and European Destinies, 1765–1885* (Rochester: Camden House, 2010), 170–71.

164 *Actes du quinzième Congrès des orientalistes*, 51–52.

had brought with him from Iran in the eighteenth century and other Oriental treasures.¹⁶⁵ Friedrich Oscar Oertel reported on successful excavations in Benares (Varanasi), which was much applauded, causing Pischel and Rosen, who still had fond memories of the city, to call for a resolution to thank the Indian government and ask for further funding – Lyall was there to listen. A number of talks, notably in the Iran section, had been cancelled, but there were presentations on the moral ideas in the Zoroastrian religion and Andreas spoke about the etymology of the word *uhlan*. Uhlans were the cavalry in the Prussian, Austrian and Polish armies. The word was argued to originate from the Turkic-Tatar, reflecting the long-standing service of Muslim Tatars in the armies of these three Christian kingdoms.¹⁶⁶

While the sections on Iran, India and linguistics had been rather mixed in languages spoken, the East Asia section was predominantly francophone and was almost entirely concerned with China. Topics included a talk about pre-Buddhist sculptures that Adolf Fischer had “purchased” in his position as the scientific attaché of the German consulate in Beijing, sixteenth century Chinese vocabularies and a failing project headed by the French Sinologist Martin-Fortris that aimed at unifying the modes of transcription of the Chinese alphabet across all European languages. Since being tasked with the job in Hamburg in 1902 Martin-Fortris had tried to unify transcription styles, but the work had turned out too time-intensive for governments. In particular, the German and the Spanish governments had not produced lists of their transcription systems yet. Austria should take on the job of the Germans, he proposed, but the section pronounced itself “incompetent” to deal with the issue with a vote of eleven to six. The Tunisian delegate Abdul Wahab delivered a paper by Belgian spiritualist and explorer of Tibet, Alexandra David, about her book on the philosophy of the Chinese thinker Mozi (468–391 BCE) and his idea of solidarity. Ouang Ki-Tseng talked about the Chinese financial system in the Han (206 BCE to 220 CE) and Tang (seventh to tenth century CE) dynasties, and presented an overview of western works recently translated to Chinese and their influence in Chinese society. An interested discussion ensued, followed by the unanimous adoption of a resolution calling on the Association of International Academies to make funds available for further translations to Chinese, bringing together western views of scientific-cultural superiority with the promise of funding for scholars.¹⁶⁷

165 Arthur Pfungst, “Orientalisten-Kongress in Kopenhagen,” *Frankfurter Zeitung* 235 (22 August 1908): 1.

166 Pfungst, “Der XV. internationale Orientalisten-Kongress in Kopenhagen.”

167 Friedrich Carl Andreas to Vilhelm Thomsen, 28 January 1910, 1 NKS 4291,4°, KB – HA.

The Semitic section was, like in Algiers, a predominantly German affair. It went through seven sessions, as more and more scholars signed up to give lectures during the congress. Themes ranged from a report of Stanley Cook's excavations in Palestine, Samaritan inscriptions and the book of Joshua to the metric system in Hebrew. "The Semitic section would have missed all its traditions, if there had not been at least one somewhat agitated session," Paul Oltramare, a Swiss Indologist and convenor of the Geneva congress in 1894, observed. The commotion had been caused by Paul Haupt from Baltimore's Johns Hopkins University. Building on notions developed by Friedrich Delitzsch previously, Haupt repeated a theory that he had already presented at the historical congress in Berlin during the summer: Jesus was not actually born in Bethlehem, but in the Galilee. The region had not been inhabited for a century and a half by Jews at the time of his birth, wherefore he could not possibly be of "David's blood". The French scholar Ernest Renan had originally concocted the idea that Jesus had purified himself of his Semitic traits and become an Aryan in his 1863 *Vie de Jésus*. Haupt now properly racialised Jesus as an Aryan. Mirroring the adamant opposition Renan had faced from Catholics and Jews half a century earlier, Oltramare observed in the committee that "piquantly, it were the Jews who defended with the most vivacity the evangelical tradition on this delicate point." The theosophist Pfungst found the altercations "most embarrassing".¹⁶⁸

The Islamic section, headed by Goldziher and Browne in a move of splitting Persian topics from the Aryan section, saw lectures on the tenth century Persian historian Hamza al-Isfahani, on Mshatta under the Umayyads, and the movement of dead bodies between cemeteries in Baghdad. Goldziher presented his much discussed findings of neo-Platonic and Gnostic elements in the hadith (reports on the actions and utterances of the prophet Muhammad). An encyclopaedia of Islam in a German-French-English edition, as had been first agreed upon at Hamburg, was presented, and the priest Louis Cheikho could present a number of works published in Beirut with the printing press of the newly founded Jesuit College St. Joseph's. Oppenheim spoke about the inscriptions he found

168 Paul Oltramare, "Le congrès international des orientalistes à Copenhague," *Revue de l'Histoire Des Religions* 58 (1908): 237; Pfungst, "Orientalisten-Kongress in Kopenhagen"; Susannah Heschel, *The Aryan Jesus: Christian Theologians and the Bible in Nazi Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 57; Suzanne Marchand, "Nazism, Orientalism and Humanism," in *Nazi Germany and the Humanities. How German Academics Embraced Nazism*, Wolfgang Bialas and Anson Rabinbach (London: Oneworld, 2014), 287; Poliakov, *Aryan Myth*, 208; Friedrich Delitzsch, "Babel und Bibel," in *Berlin-Babylon. Eine deutsche Faszination, 1890–1930*, Andrea Polaschegg, Michael Weichenhan, and Janika Gelinek (Berlin: Klaus Wagenbach, 2018), 70–86.

during his travels in the Fertile Crescent. August Fischer suggested a plan for the compilation of a new dictionary of old Arabic; the section formed an international commission to make it happen. Carl-Heinrich Becker, representing the Colonial Institute in Hamburg, promised to support the endeavour with the manuscripts held at the city's libraries, and the Tunisian Abdul Wahab would also see what Tunis could contribute.¹⁶⁹

The Section of Greece and the Orient was a return of the “Wechselwirkungen” of Orient and Occident to the geographically more limited space of Greece, but continued to deal with the same questions of interaction between Greece, Armenia, the Jews, Italy, the Ottoman Empire, Persia and Arabia. The section titled “Ethnography and Folklore of the Orient” saw a mix of modern topics between cultural adaptation in Algeria, the awakening of nationalism in Asia, black magic in Ceylon and an ethnographic presentation on the people of the Western Pamir mountains.¹⁷⁰ There was movement in the arrangement and contents of sections, and new topics were introduced, but the predominant focus on ancient and sometimes medieval topics prevailed. The enlargement of the Islamic section, corresponding to a growing interest in Islam in Germany and Europe at the time, expanded the scope of the congress temporally, but philological methodology continued to outshine more practical approaches useful for colonial enterprises.¹⁷¹

3.4 The Turfan Show

On 1 May 1908 the Danish organisers sent out a report to potential participants with an overview of twenty-six confirmed lectures, including the main highlight of the congress: under the title “The Royal Prussian Expedition to Chinese-Turkestan and its results (with presentation of light pictures)” the five Germans Richard Pischel, Albert Grünwedel, Friedrich Müller, Emil Sieg and Albert von Le Coq would present the findings of the latest German funded expedition to Central Asia in the general assembly of the congress. Le Coq and Thomsen

169 *Actes du quinzième Congrès des orientalistes*, 68–72.

170 *Actes du quinzième Congrès des orientalistes*, 74–77.

171 Carl-Heinrich Becker, “Die orientalischen Wissenschaften. Der Vordere Orient und Afrika,” in *Deutschland unter Kaiser Wilhelm II* (1914), 1185; Rebekka Habermas, “Debates on Islam in Imperial Germany,” in *Islam and the European Empires*, David Motadel (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 231–55; David Motadel, “Islam und die Politik der europäischen Großmächte, 1798–1989,” *Neue Politische Literatur* 1 (2011): 37–60; David Motadel, *Islam and Nazi Germany's War* (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2014), 16.

had prepared the show since February of that year. Thomsen had a twofold interest in the presentation. It distinguished the congress with its potential findings, which would attract further scholarly participants and local attention in the run-up to the congress. Furthermore, Thomsen's own research interests in Central Asia made him enthusiastic about putting Central Asia centre-stage at Copenhagen's congress.¹⁷²

The first German Central Asia expedition to Turfan under Grünwedel – a member of the Russian expedition of 1899 – left Berlin in the fall of 1902, a few months after the Hamburg congress. In April 1903 the expedition had returned with forty-six crates of each 37.5 kilogram of paintings, statues and manuscripts from the area of the Turfan oasis and the northern Silk Road. Among the artefacts Grünwedel and his crew brought back to Germany were Manichaean Estrangelo (Syriac) scripts, Turkic scripts and Indian and Chinese texts.¹⁷³ At this point settled in Göttingen, in 1905 Andreas deciphered in the scripts traces of Arasacid (Western Iranian language spoken in Parthian Empire, third century BCE to third century CE), middle-Persian (Sasanian Empire, third to seventh century CE) and Sogdian (Eastern Iranian language spoken along the silk road sixth to eleventh century CE). The director of the East Asian section of Berlin's ethnographic museum Friedrich Müller deliberated based on Grünwedel's artefacts in the spring of 1907 at the Prussian Academy of the Sciences on the "Persian calendar expressions in the Chinese, Buddhist canon." The praise for deciphering the languages fell to Müller, but the Danish scholar Arthur Christensen suggested in a letter to Martin Hartmann that the main work had been done by Andreas, which

172 Albert von Le Coq to Vilhelm Thomsen, 2 May 1909, 14 NKS 4291,4^o, KB – HA; Sarauw, *Congrès international des orientalistes. Quinzième session. Report Number 3*.

173 Manichaeans practiced a dualist religion going back to the teachings of the Iranian prophet Mani (third century CE), who drew inspiration from Zoroastrianism, Christianity and Buddhism. Manichaeism was a major religious movement stretching from the Atlantic to the Chinese sea. Adherents were persecuted nearly always and everywhere. The religion declined by the ninth century CE and was extinct after the Mongol conquest of the Uighur kingdom of Qocho in the thirteenth century. Aloïs van Tongerloo and Michael Knüppel, "Fünf Briefe A. Grünwedels an F. C. Andreas aus den Jahren 1904–1916," *ZDMG* 162 (2012): 128; Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, *Russian Orientalism*, 192; Simone-Christiane Raschmann, "The Berlin Turfan-Collection," in *Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin. Preußischer Kulturbesitz. Orient*. <http://staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/die-staatsbibliothek/abteilungen/orient/aufgaben-profil/veroeffentlichungen/berlin-turfan-collection/>; Genovese, "Congress of Orientalists," 15; Werner Sundermann, "Manichaeism i. General Survey," *Encyclopædia Iranica* (2009). <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/manicheism-1-general-survey>.

Müller failed to attribute properly and by 1908 it was generally recognised that Andreas had identified the Sogdian.¹⁷⁴

The positive reception of the first expedition among scholars and the estimation of further treasures ensured a second expedition. Preparations for another expedition from India into Hotan under the lead of Aurel Stein were equally underway, which further encouraged funders in Germany to open their coffers. The German state spent a total of 200,000 Marks on a follow-up expedition. Harnack, Sachau, Meyer and Pischel could convince the German government the findings would bring sufficient prestige, and Grünwedel acquired further financial support from Krupp and the art collector James Simon.¹⁷⁵ Grünwedel and his assistant Georg Huth – also a student of Andreas and Rosen at the SOS – had returned from the first expedition with their health impaired and Huth died soon after.¹⁷⁶ With the direction of the next expedition still in the hands of Grünwedel, it was led into Central Asia in November 1904 by Albert von Le Coq, a wealthy heir to the Le Coq brewery of Dorpat (Tartu), who had been studying at Berlin's ethnographic museum with Grünwedel. Grünwedel joined up with Le Coq a year later.¹⁷⁷ Using the maps of their Russian predecessor Klementz, the combined second and third expeditions covered a distance of over 3,500 kilometres along the northern edge of the Tarim basin from northernmost Urumqi to Turfan, Toyuq and Kumul in the east, and via the Kumtura caves at Kuqa, the Shorxuq caves at Karasahr, the Bezeklik caves, Tumxuk, Kizilsu to Kashgar on the western edge of the desert.¹⁷⁸ Until the spring of 1907 the expedition collected a total of 221 Buddhist wall-paintings in Bezeklik, Christian texts in Sogdian and Syriac, Buddhist texts in Turkic runes, paintings taken out of temples and

174 Arthur Christensen to Martin Hartmann, 16 June 1907, copy, I 1 Utilg. 578, KB – HA; Friedrich Carl Andreas to Friedrich Rosen, 12 August 1908, ASWPC; Lentz, MacKenzie, and Schlerath, “Andreas, Friedrich Carl”; Akademienvorhaben Turfanforschung, *Turfanforschung* (Berlin: Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2007), 18; Torma, *Turkestan-Expeditionen*, 82; Yutaka Yoshida, “Sogdian Language i. Description,” *Encyclopædia Iranica*, 11 November 2016. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/sogdian-language-01>; Nicholas Sims-Williams, “The Rediscovery of Sogdian, Lingua Franca of the Silk Road,” lecture (Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2019).

175 Werner Sundermann, “Turfan Expeditions,” *Encyclopædia Iranica* (2004). <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/turfan-expeditions-2>; Knüppel and van Tongerloo, *Bang und Andreas*, 14; Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 420; Mirsky, *Aurel Stein*, 225–30.

176 Michael Knüppel, “Huth, Georg,” *Encyclopædia Iranica*, 3 September 2014. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/huth-georg>.

177 Yaldiz, “Deutsche Turfan-Expeditionen,” 196–7.

178 Sundermann, “Turfan Expeditions”; Genovese, “Congress of Orientalists”; Dreyer, “Russen auf der Seidenstraße,” 183.

grottoes at Kumtura and Kizilsu, as well as further Buddhist texts and paintings taken out of a temple complex at Korla and caves of Shorxuq.¹⁷⁹ The lavish finances of the Prussian state permitted the expedition to operate under less time pressure than other expeditions to Central Asia, allowing Le Coq and Grünwedel to enter into what Sundermann calls “a kind of cooperation with the local people” and to systematically work their way through sites, resulting in a rich plunder to be brought back to Germany. In comparison to German excavations in the Ottoman Empire, Marchand notes that also due to the lack of control by Chinese authorities the expeditions were frenzied and amounted to an “antiquities rush”.¹⁸⁰

Not the scholarly type like Grünwedel, Le Coq was more apt at networking and disseminating the findings of the Turfan expeditions, and presenting the results of the latest expedition at Copenhagen was an opportunity not to be missed. The first evaluations back in Berlin promised new ideas about the origins of cultures, languages, religions and peoples in Central Asia, and Le Coq sent miniature photographs of some of the artefacts to Thomsen in Copenhagen with the promise of involving him in some of the rich deciphering work. A group of scholars in Berlin between the museum of ethnography, where Grünwedel, Le Coq and Müller were based, and at the university under the direction of the senior Indologist Pischel, had started examining the artefacts. With a presentation of the expedition using Le Coq’s picture material these preliminary findings were to be presented in Copenhagen.¹⁸¹

The Turfan show was held in the afternoon of 17 August 1908 in the packed grand hall of Copenhagen University in the presence of the Danish king. Pischel opened with an introduction to the Royal Prussian Chinese-Turkestan expedition and was followed by Le Coq, who projected photographs of the sites and artefacts on the wall of the grand hall to illustrate the richness of the artefacts collected by the expedition. The rather long presentation, as Oltramare noted, was particularly interesting for the history of Buddhism and included material in ten languages and five scripts.¹⁸² Le Coq’s picture show was complemented by Müller, who presented findings that further illustrated the Manichaeian and Buddhist past of the Uighurs. A part of the Turkic manuscripts Müller had worked on was

179 Genovese, “Congress of Orientalists,” 15.

180 Sundermann, “Turfan Expeditions”; Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 422.

181 *Actes du quinzième congrès des orientalistes. Session de Copenhague 1908* (Copenhagen: Imprimerie Graebe, 1909), 78; Pfungst, “Orientalisten-Kongress in Kopenhagen”; Oltramare, “Congrès à Copenhague,” 234; Albert von Le Coq to Vilhelm Thomsen, 14 May 1909, 14 NKS 4291,4°, KB – HA; Albert von Le Coq to Vilhelm Thomsen, 2 May 1909, 14 NKS 4291,4°, KB – HA.

182 Oltramare, “Congrès à Copenhague”; “Orientalisterne.”

on the recommendation of Pischel passed on to the two junior scholars Emil Sieg – another student of Andreas and Rosen at the SOS – and Wilhelm Siegling. While working on the manuscripts Sieg and Siegling realised that part of the texts were written in a previously unknown language, which they managed to identify as Tocharian, the language of the Indo-Scythians that had migrated from Central to Southern and Western Asia in the second century BCE. Sieg's presentation of the new language, which connected Europeans to a past in Central Asia, was a highlight in Copenhagen.¹⁸³

Orientalist dreams were made off this – many different languages and scripts that illuminated centuries and millennia of the past. The deciphering of the Old-Turkic runes on the Orkhon stones by the congress president Thomsen fifteen years earlier, that “work of genius..., comparable only to the discoveries which led to the reading of the hieroglyphs and the cuneiform inscriptions”, now laid the foundation for the further deciphering and discovery of languages in Chinese-Turkestan. Pischel, Le Coq and Müller were only too glad to elaborate on this circumstance in their speeches and Rosen informed the German government that this was “a conjuncture, that had a very agreeable effect on His Majesty the King, as it did generally on the leading circles of Denmark”.¹⁸⁴ The agreeable “conjuncture” that the president of the congress, rector of the hosting university and Denmark's most eminent scholar was singled out by the German presenters of the most impressive findings of the congress for his indispensable spadework was more than just coincidence. The elevation Thomsen experienced was also orchestrated by the German presenters as an act of scholarly-diplomatic flattering. To leave a good impression with the Danish hosts, not least with the King, was important for the working atmosphere of the congress. Praise for the Danish Orientalists would also have been calculated to strengthen their position through the press attention the Turfan show received in the local newspapers. Considering the German dominance, putting on display generosity was imperative for German representatives.

What did the Turfan show achieve? Immediately it made the congress a success. With Tocharian a new Indo-European language had been presented and by impressing a plethora of languages, scripts, civilisations and religions through

183 “Congrès international des orientalistes. Quinzième session,” Report Number 5, ASWPC (Copenhagen, 1908); *Actes du quinzième Congrès des orientalistes*, 78; Stache-Rosen, *German Indologists*, 169–71; Otto Kuhn, Hubert Jansen, Adolf Bistram, and Emil Sieg, Photo Card Given to Friedrich Carl Andreas, 4 July 1889, Lou Andreas-Salomé Archiv; Emil Sieg, “Wilhelm Siegling (1880–1945) (Nachruf),” *ZDMG* 99 (1950): 147; Torma, *Turkestan-Expeditionen*, 83.

184 Konow, “Vilhelm Thomsen,” 933; Robolski to Hamburg Senate, 15 September 1908, 15 / 15a, 132–11 874, StAH.

the various artefacts upon the audience, the German presenters had pulled off the “clou” of the congress, as Rosen reported back to the German government.¹⁸⁵ Even if not all reporters, or even the specialists, grasped the significance or managed to accurately place the various languages, peoples and religions in time and place, the visual effects of the show and the multitude of it all sufficed to make the Turfan expedition Copenhagen’s prime event.¹⁸⁶ The presence of the Danish king and the crown prince in the audience and the centrality on the congress agenda convinced even those, who had no idea what it all meant, of the principal nature of the expedition. The Danish press was particularly taken by the presenters paying homage to their Orientalist eminence Thomsen. Ultramare noted that what had been Thomsen’s theory of the Orkhon stones had now been proven, and Pfungst noted that the “congress had come to the opinion that [the Turfan show] had been a success of rare momentousness.” The German delegation had achieved a twofold success. With the largest number of foreign participants present at the congress and a general German dominance, it had also produced the greatest new research findings, which were skilfully put into scene, increasing German scholarship’s prestige. Rather than provoking a defensive reaction by hosts or other scholars, the presenters had found cause to “revere” their hosts and their greatest scholar as the one without none of this would have been possible.¹⁸⁷ This was soft power at its best.

As in congresses before, successful presentations of results from Central Asia were the rubber-stamp needed for further funding of expeditions and research. Or as Rosen wrote to Bülow in his report about the Turfan show, “I see it as my duty to obediently render account about this to His Highness, and believe, that the impression evoked by the verbal communications must be increased substantially by a summarising publication.” Rosen’s report was positively reviewed by Wilhelm II, who expressed his “satisfaction”. During a breakfast with Rosen, the Kaiser was so “greatly enthused” by what the scholars could extrapolate from the Turfan artefacts that Rosen told his sovereign that he “regretted to only now have really learned to know him”.

On Rosen’s instigation and supported by Müller, Thomsen was decorated by Wilhelm as a sign of appreciation of his groundwork in deciphering the Orkhon stones.¹⁸⁸ Thomsen’s decoration facilitated his participation in deciphering the

185 Robolski to Hamburg Senate, 15 September 1908, 15 / 15a, 132–II 874, StAH.

186 Ultramare, “Congrès à Copenhague,” 234; “Orientalisterne”; Pfungst, “Orientalisten-Kongress in Kopenhagen.”

187 Pfungst, “Orientalisten-Kongress in Kopenhagen.”

188 Robolski to Hamburg Senate, 15 September 1908, 15 / 15a, 132–II 874, StAH; Marie von Bunsen, *Die Welt in der ich lebte. 1860–1912* (Leipzig: Koehler & Amelang, 1929), 191; Friedrich Rosen

scripts the Germans had brought back from Turfan, but the association of the master decipherer also lent credibility to Berlin's researchers. The two hundred and twenty-one crates produced more work than the Germans could stem and Le Coq's invitation to Thomsen to work on the largest Turkic manuscript came in line with invitations to other international scholars to partake in the effort, like the French Sinologist Édouard Chavannes, who had travelled Hotan before as well and had worked on the findings of Marc Aurel Stein. The only condition for Thomsen's and Chavannes' participation was that the work would be published with the Prussian Academy – international cooperation under German wings. Müller and Andreas were also brought in.¹⁸⁹ Rosen's lobbying with the German government to make financial support for the forthcoming publications available was forthcoming as Le Coq was happy to report to Thomsen. The Reichsdruckerei (imperial printing house) had taken on the job of publication and allowed for as many corrections as the scholars wanted. Thomsen's *Blatt in türkischer "Runen" Schrift aus Turfan* (sheet in Turkish rune script from Turfan) was published in 1910 and distributed in one hundred and fifty copies. "Dr. Rosen in Morocco would certainly be pleased, if he was taken into consideration", Le Coq advised Thomsen.¹⁹⁰

In the following years Thomsen continued working on Turkish languages, from which he had taken a pause in the 1900s, publishing in 1916 his large *Turcica* and in 1922 a revised and enlarged edition of his earlier work on the Orkhon stones. By the following year the Russian Sergey Oldenburg was the next European explorer to unearth further significant Sogdian pieces at Turfan. Originally, Oldenburg and Grünwedel had sought to coordinate their research, but reservations by scholars both in Berlin and St. Petersburg prevented closer collaborations.¹⁹¹ Le Coq ventured on a fourth expedition to Central Asia sponsored by the German government and private funders in 1913–14. Around the same time the Japanese and French governments were sponsoring their own expeditions. The expeditions, excavations and removal of artefacts from Chinese Turkestan only came to an end when the Chinese government started enforcing border

to Vilhelm Thomsen, 21 July 1909, 14 NKS 4291,4°, KB – HA; Knüppel and van Tongerloo, *Bang und Andreas*, 118.

189 Albert von Le Coq to Vilhelm Thomsen, 2 May 1909, 14 NKS 4291,4°, KB – HA; Werner Sundermann, "Chavannes, Emmanuel-Édouard," *Encyclopædia Iranica* V, no. 4 (15 December 2011): 389–91; Friedrich Carl Andreas to Vilhelm Thomsen, 16 April 1910, 1 NKS 4291,4°, KB – HA.

190 Albert von Le Coq to Vilhelm Thomsen, 4 February 1910, 14 NKS 4291,4°, KB – HA; Albert von Le Coq to Vilhelm Thomsen, 12 March 1910, 14 NKS 4291,4°, KB – HA.

191 van Tongerloo and Knüppel, "Grünwedel an Andreas," 136–38.

controls in 1925–1926.¹⁹² Scholars continue to analyse these relics until today – even if popular interest may no longer be as strong as it was during the frenzy of expeditions, when the crossroads of Central Asia pointed to more and more blending of languages, religions and peoples, and some were beginning to believe in a European-Asian intellectual-spiritual community.¹⁹³

3.5 Scholarship in Public Diplomacy

Lobbying for the cause of scholarship was not all that was on Rosen's mind at the Orientalist congress. Taking an extended break from continuously problematic Morocco, the German envoy in Tangier also could perform a different kind of diplomacy in heading the German delegation to Copenhagen. When the Auswärtiges Amt announced Rosen's participation at the congress in the fall of 1907, the Turfan show was still far off, but memories of the aborted Björkö Treaty between Kaiser Wilhelm and Tsar Nicholas in the summer of 1905 were still fresh. At the time rumours circulated in Europe that Germany wanted to make the Baltic Sea a mare clausum and pull Denmark firmly into its orbit. As German power grew, some Danish politicians began to believe that the peninsula was already firmly in its southern neighbour's sphere of influence and that its best hope for continued independence was to demonstrate to the Germans that a British military invasion would be repelled by Danish fortifications. Between 1906 and 1908 the Lütken-Moltke talks charted out the possibility of closer relations between Germany and Denmark.¹⁹⁴ When the time came for the governmental greeting speeches at the Copenhagen congress, the geo-political situation between the

192 During WWI, Turkish nationalists considered the rune script of the Orkhon stones as a replacement for the Arabic script. Sundermann, "Turfan Expeditions"; Genovese, "Congress of Orientalists," 14; L. Hanisch, *Briefwechsel Becker und Hartmann*, 95–96.

193 Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 425; Torma, *Turkestan-Expeditionen*, 85; Raschmann, "The Berlin Turfan-Collection"; Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, "Publikationen. Turfanforschungen." http://turfan.bbaw.de/publikationen/publikationen#Publikationlisten_Mitarbeiter.

194 Arthur Christensen, Registration Book – Congress, 9 December 1907, Note, III 2 NKS 1927, KB – HA; Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg to Hamburg Senate, 6 October 1907, 132–II 874, StAH; Röhl, *Der Weg in den Abgrund*, 428–32; Clark, *Die Herrschaft des letzten deutschen Kaisers*, 188; Patrick Salmon, *Scandinavia and the Great Powers 1890–1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 104–7; Karl Christian Lammers, "I skyggen af den tyske stormagt: De hemmelige dansk-tyske militærsonderinger 1906–07," in 1908. *Et snapshot af de kulturelle relationer mellem Tyskland og Danmark*, Stephan Michael Schröder and Martin Zerlang (Hellerup: Spring, 2011), 62–74; Rüger, *Heligoland*, 114.

country he represented and his hosts played into Rosen's triangulations. In offering financial assistance to individual scholars from the German states to travel to Copenhagen, the German government invested more into its presence at the Orientalist Congress than it had done in Hamburg or Algiers and made a big show out of its prowess by having the German delegation enter the assembly hall in one cohort. The German representative had to deliver a speech addressing the congress that lived up to the German numbers show, fit into the theme of the Orientalist congress and demonstrated friendly German intentions to flank the hard-power German-Danish negotiations still underway in the summer of 1908.¹⁹⁵

A good and tested way to do this was to depoliticise the speech and make it all about scholarship: Danish Orientalist scholarship. Rosen knew little about the Danish scene, but Andreas did. Andreas had spent several years in Copenhagen in the late 1860s studying middle-Iranian manuscripts in the city's library and had continued to cultivate scholarly relations with Danish scholars since. Nina Rosen wrote to Andreas in early June 1908 that her husband had been appointed as German representative to the congress in Copenhagen, and that he hoped Andreas would also attend, particularly since he was "so especially well acquainted with the Danish circumstances." In preparation, Nina asked Andreas if he could send her husband some notes on "Orientalism in Denmark" and a few names of Danish scholars.¹⁹⁶ Andreas registered in Copenhagen a few weeks later, but was again short on money.¹⁹⁷ More important for Rosen's immediate preparation were the extensive notes Andreas sent him that narrated a history of Danish Oriental studies along the lives and works of Denmark's most important Orientalists.

Andreas' history went back to the work of Hebraists in the seventeenth century and the important work the Danish mission in India did "for the knowledge of Tamil and other Indian dialects." Andreas qualified in both cases: the Hebraists were not so brilliant to deserve mention by name, and the missionaries in Danish India should also not be mentioned by name as most of them had been of German origin. Via Rasmus Rask, whose publications on old-Iranian Andreas praised in particular, and the Indologist Niels Ludwig Westergaard (1815–1878), who had also worked on old-Iranian, Buddha and ancient Indian history,

195 Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg to Hamburg Senate, 6 October 1907, 132–II 874, StAH; Fuchs, "The Politics of the Republic of Learning," 216.

196 Knüppel and van Tongerloo, *Bang und Andreas*, 20; Nina Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 4 June 1908, 362 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG.

197 Friedrich Carl Andreas to Friedrich Rosen, 12 August 1908, ASWPC; Arthur Christensen, Registration Book – Congress, 9 December 1907, Note, III 2 NKS 1927, KB – HA; Wilhelm Solf to Friedrich Rosen, 2 March 1903, ASWPC.

Andreas advised Rosen to mention several scholars who had lived into the nineteenth century. Andreas told Rosen to double check on a number of the names he sent him, if they had really been Danish, from neighbouring Schleswig-Holstein or if they had been Germans in Danish services. Adam Olearius (1599/1603–1671), who had translated Sa'di's *Gulistan*, was one of those Andreas was not sure about, and had in fact been in the diplomatic service of Holstein when travelling to Isfahan in the 1630s.¹⁹⁸ Of the contemporary Danish Orientalists Andreas provided snippets of research interests and major publications. Also, in preparation of Rosen's further engagements at Copenhagen, Andreas drew up another list that detailed scholarly fields and the position scholars held in the university hierarchy. In both lists, Vilhelm Thomsen was at the top. At the end of ten hand-written letter pages Andreas underlined that "it was the Danish government that covered the costs of Carsten Niebuhr's famous journey to Arabia and surrounding countries in 1761–67".¹⁹⁹



Fig. 5.3. Friedrich Carl Andreas (second from left) and Friedrich Rosen (third from right) among their students of the Seminar für Orientalische Sprachen in 1889.

¹⁹⁸ Polaschegg, *Der andere Orientalismus*, 197; Franklin Lewis, "Golestān-e Sa'di."

¹⁹⁹ Friedrich Carl Andreas, *Dänische Orientalisten*, 1908, memorandum, ASWPC.

Andreas' notes formed the foundation of Rosen's speech at the opening ceremony of the Orientalist congress, which was full of calculated praise of Danish Orientalism and Danish Orientalists. As Andreas had cautioned, Rosen side-stepped matters of German-Danish overlaps that were not suitable for commending Denmark alone. Instead he tied the German and Danish nations together amicably along their scholarly co-operations. Rosen postulated that Denmark held a central position for the study of the Orient in Europe. Often using Andreas' exact words, Rosen chronologically recounted the scholarly achievements from the early Hebraists in the seventeenth century, via the Danish government's sponsoring of Niebuhr's Arabian "famous journey", to Rask, Niels Ludwig Westergaard and the late Indologist Viggo Fausbøll, and then to the living scholars with Thomsen at the helm. This excursus of the Danish achievements of Orientalism was followed up by Rosen with a question he supposed some in the audience may have asked themselves: "How is it that a Nordic country takes such an extraordinary role in the history of general linguistics and Oriental philology?" His answer: "The answer lies in the cultural mission, that every highly developed country feels as its calling to fulfill." Denmark was participating in the quest of all Orientalists in their different fields to find "the beginnings, origins and basis of all to us known culture forms, not least our own," which would lead back to "the birth place of the great world-shaking ideas, that have shaped in major proportions our religious, governmental and social lives." The Danish invitation to all countries to partake in this "noble and high endeavour" was the real significance of the congress. This Rosen rounded off by expressing gratitude for the stimulus and support offered by the Danish rulers and scholars to German Oriental studies.²⁰⁰

As was the case in Hamburg, these salutations of mutual national praise by national representatives were the rule rather than the exception. Rosen's speech followed King Frederick VIII of Denmark's welcoming of the foreign guests, Vilhelm Thomsen's election to preside over the congress by acclamation and the greetings of the Austrian, French, American, Algerian, British, Italian, Swedish and Russian representatives.²⁰¹ If only because he spoke clearly and loudly, Rosen's speech was particularly well-received. The reporter of the *Jyllandsposten* complained about the king's speech "not receiving high grades" and Thomsen's talk being inaudible. Although Rosen spoke in German, his laudatio to the achievements of Danish Orientalism going back to Niebuhr was perceived as "ele-

200 Friedrich Rosen, Rede Kopenhagen, 1908, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen, 1. Fassung Rede Kopenhagen, ASWPC.

201 Oltramare, "Congrès à Copenhague," 233.

gant” and contrasted positively to Gubernatis, whose speech was overshadowed by coming “overhung with medals and orders”.²⁰² A few days later, the German representative was among a smaller circle of other national representatives and eminences who were invited to dine with Danish King Frederick VIII. At the dinner, as Rosen reported back to Bülow, Frederick talked personally with Rosen: “His Majesty very graciously expressed his satisfaction about a speech I had held during the opening of the congress, in which I had commemorated the role of Danish scholarship in the study of the Orient.”²⁰³

In his speech in the final plenary Rosen then praised the Danish king for supporting Oriental studies, and reiterated the intellectual debt of German Oriental studies to the work of Danish Orientalists. The royal house, said Rosen, had showered the participants with honours and amenities, which the scholars understood to be not for them, but for the cause they served: scholarship. Of course, it had been an extraordinarily successful congress, further stimulating the “harmonious” collaboration of Orient scholars. Rosen’s speech was again the only one to be widely praised by the Danish press. Partially, this was due to Rosen speaking “fluently, elegantly and loudly, of which [loudness] one has not been accustomed.” But it was also Rosen’s praise of Danish scholarship that was well-received, and in the reading of *Jyllandsposten* and *Nationaltidende* Rosen had called for the king’s and the government’s continuing support of Oriental studies, a cause that the two conservative newspapers equally supported.²⁰⁴ Congratulating everyone for a “beautiful and harmonious congress”, Rosen ended on loud applause, and the German representative could report back to his foreign ministry that the participation of Germany’s Orientalists in Copenhagen had been a success.

It had not only been the number of German Orientalists’ representation, but also “their quality” that gave the congress a “distinct German imprint”. Despite French being the official language of the congress, German was spoken “spontaneously” by several participants, particularly from the Scandinavian countries. In Rosen’s perception “the members of other nations did not feel set back in any way”; rather, the congress was marked by “harmless, friendly interactions, in part going back to old personal relationships [of scholars]”. The picture show of Le Coq’s Turfan expedition was the highlight, and Rosen was pleased to report to the Auswärtiges Amt that Le Coq’s singling out of the significance of Thom-

202 “Orientalisterne.”

203 Robolski to Hamburg Senate, 15 September 1908, 15 / 15a, 132–1I 874, StAH.

204 Friedrich Rosen, Rede, 20 August 1908, Report Number 8, ASWPC; “Orientalisterne,” *Jyllandsposten* 220 (21 August 1908): 3; “Orientalistkongressen,” *Nationaltidende* 11.637 (20 August 1908): 3; “Orientalisternes Kongres,” *Social-Demokraten* 231 (21 August 1908): 1.

sen's prior work had left an agreeable impression with the Danish king. As many foreign savants had congratulated Rosen for the results of the Prussian Turfan expedition, this imbued the German state with the responsibility for ensuring a quick publication of its results. Generally, Rosen had his superiors in Berlin know that as the congress progressed "the interactions between Germans and Danes grew more and more cordial", and he estimated that the success of the congress would also further strengthen German relations with the Nordic countries.²⁰⁵

3.6 The *Ruba'iyat* of Omar Khayyam in Danish-German Collaboration

Rosen came to Copenhagen prepared with another talk with which he joined the ranks of the normal Orientalist presentations. Speaking in the Islamic section Rosen offered a rendering of some of Omar Khayyam's quatrains he had translated to German and spoke about the world view of the Persian philosopher, mathematician, astronomer and poet. After the presentation he struck up a relationship with the Danish Iranist Arthur Christensen that would prove beneficial for the quality of Rosen's subsequent Khayyam publications. Christensen had worked on Khayyam in the previous years. More immediately, Rosen's presentation ingratiated him with an audience of scholars, who recognised his work despite him being unaffiliated to academia and his speechifying in the general assembly was enhanced by a measure of authentic scholarship. That the representative of the German Reich could engage on par with the great Orientalist luminaries of the day was a bonus for German prestige. Synonymous with Germany's quarrelsome attitude in Morocco by the time, the talk about the well-known and witty Epicurean Omar Khayyam also allowed Rosen to portray himself in a different light to the public, as the *Jyllandsposten* observed.²⁰⁶

Although Rosen's participation as German representative was decided upon already a year before the event, his announcement to present a paper only reached the organisational committee a few weeks before the beginning of the congress.²⁰⁷ During his eight years in Iran Rosen read from a manuscript of Khayyam's quatrains, often while travelling the country on horseback and at night translating single quatrains. For months this would be his main intellectual nourishment, he recounted later. The translations had not been intended for

205 Robolski to Hamburg Senate, 15 September 1908, 15 / 15a, 132–11 874, StAH.

206 "Orientalisterne."

207 Christian Sarauw to Friedrich Rosen, 4 August 1908, ASWPC.

publication, but friends to whom he on occasion read a poem urged him to make his translations more widely available. Equally encouraging was the success of Edward FitzGerald's translation of Omar's quatrains in the English speaking world.²⁰⁸ Rosen had first encountered the Khayyami *Ruba'iyat* at the court of viceroy Dufferin in India in 1886–7. He was also aware of the scholarly investigations by the Russian Iranist Valentin Zhukovskii and Denison Ross in the late 1890s that had started to accompany the popular craze over Khayyam in the Anglophone world. But part of his emphasis on the long-standing nature of his work was to avoid accusations that were levelled at him regardless in 1909 by the *Berliner Tageblatt*, which charged that Rosen had neglected his duties to German interests in Morocco over his translations of poetry. Already at the congress in Copenhagen Oltramare had noted with some astonishment that the German envoy to Morocco had found the time to “thoroughly study” Omar Khayyam.²⁰⁹

What was the world view of Omar Khayyam that Rosen presented to the Islamic section in Copenhagen? In the 1909 publication of *Die Sinnsprüche Omars des Zeltmachers. Rubaiyat-i-Omar-Khajjam* Rosen noted that the epilogue was largely based on his lecture in Copenhagen.²¹⁰ Though printed in relatively large font, it is unlikely that Rosen verbally delivered all of what was later published on sixty-three pages within the allotted twenty minutes at the congress. Without going into which references and pieces of analysis were added only after the talk, the three general parts of Rosen's lecture 1) situated Khayyam in time and space to serve as context for 2) Khayyam's life, and lastly 3) Khayyam's world view.

Rosen located Khayyam in the time of the “highest blossoming of Islamic culture” which he characterised as the “first renaissance, which provided the hotbed for nearly all of the intellectual life of the [European] Middle Ages... until the great second renaissance brought forth the powerful progress in all areas of knowledge and art, the blessings of which still gratify humanity today”. People, Rosen claimed, thought of this period of high culture mostly in terms of Spain, and merely as a “pre-renaissance”. The Persians were, however, the main source of this culture, maintaining rudiments of antique Greek culture:

“Despite the rigidity of Muslim orthodoxy, Persian scholars ventured – even if in Arabic language and form – to give significance to the teachings of Plato, Aristotle, Euclides, Hippo-

208 Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 9–10.

209 Vassel, *Berlin und Marokko*, 89–90; Oltramare, “Congrès à Copenhague,” 236.

210 Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 83.

crate, Galeus, Pythagoran and above all neo-Platonism. It was an Aryan spirit in a Semitic vest. The scholars drew on movements, which in part had their origins in Islam itself.”

Central to this was Sufism, which Rosen related to ascetics of Indian and Central Asian Buddhism. The Sufi belief in the oneness of God “tawhid”, and its frequent quietism allowed an accommodation with the orthodoxy of Islam that he saw strengthening during the lifetime of Khayyam.²¹¹ Rosen speculated that some of Khayyam’s quatrains were meant as barbs against these orthodox tendencies. The growing influence of Shi’a Islam in Iran at the same time was for Rosen another illustration of the various influences under which Omar must have come:

“All these manifold and varied intellectual currents – contradictory and intertwined among themselves – of this great century need to be kept in mind, when trying to picture this wonderful man, who knew and in his short sentences bespoke them all. Yet, who stood much above them as he stood above his time.”²¹²

Of Rosen’s description of Khayyam’s life it is important to note that Rosen understood Khayyam as religious enough to go on the hajj to Mecca, but also as a life-long student of the philosopher Avicenna. Before his death Khayyam supposedly prayed, “O lord, truly, I have tried to know you, as much as it was in my powers. Thus forgive me. My knowledge of you, may be my intercessor with you.” Rosen emphasised the importance of this instance, as it had been purported in other sources that Khayyam had been “a disastrous philosopher, an atheist and a materialist.”²¹³

Rosen’s reading of Khayyam’s “Weltanschauung” (world view) mirrored these contradictions and intellectual currents, which he illustrated by reading out some of his German translations of the Khayyami *Ruba’iyat*.²¹⁴ Rosen noted that ever since Zhukovskii discovered a large amount of quatrains attributed to Khayyam in the collections of other Iranian poets in 1897, the authenticity of the quatrains had been put into question. But since also these wandering quatrains were inspired by Khayyam, for Rosen they had a place in his collection “as they crystallised around him”.²¹⁵ Rosen’s main thesis was that Khayyam was neither of a “purely materialist-atheist, nor a traditional-church orientation”, but

211 Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 84–89.

212 Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 92–95.

213 Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 107.

214 Pfungst, “Orientalisten-Kongress in Kopenhagen.”

215 It was like distinguishing what was intrinsic to the Bible or Homer’s opus or had been later incorporated, Rosen thought. Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 110–11.

was somewhere close to quietist approaches found in Sufi Islam, while remaining a sceptic who based his often biting criticism on a materialist understanding of nature. Taking cover in the ambiguity of language, Khayyam made his poems appear as what the reader wanted to read into them, which Rosen described as the Persian art of Ketman, “between pretense and art of disguise”. As an example, he presented a Persian word he had translated as “subjugation”, which could, however, also mean “piety” or “devotion”, making it religiously acceptable.²¹⁶

Rosen read Khayyam as a skilled seeker of truth: “In the great, the only and eternal culture clash, which man has always fought, the fight between the seekers and those, who believe to have found, [Khayyam] embodies those restlessly striving for knowledge (Erkenntnis).” In a show of his reading of Renan and many Iranian modernists, Rosen characterised the stifling orthodox dogma found in Khayyam’s quatrains as an Arabian quality, that was foreign to Persian civilisation: “Omar Khayyam is the Aryan, who does not want to perish in the dogma and the tradition of Arabness so prevalent in his country at the time. 400 years of Islam’s rule had not sufficed to eradicate the Indo-German spirit of the Persians.”²¹⁷

In answering his own question of what uplifting notions were to be found in Khayyam’s world view, Rosen pointed at some of Khayyam’s quatrains and philosophical texts that uphold the unity of existence, encompassing God and all of mankind, even as man is unable to attain full enlightenment, relief from oppressiveness and realises the futility of life, struggling in his search for truth, and finally handing himself over to God. Rosen concluded that Omar stood above religions, dogmas and schools of thought, and that it were precisely his contradictions that gave rise to his philosophical achievements, which put Omar among the “greatest and best that have reached immortality in the memory of terrestrials”.²¹⁸

Apart from thus impressing on the members present in the Islamic section of the congress the greatness of Omar Khayyam, Rosen portrayed the full tool kit of his Orientalist skills. With his translations, the first ones rendered faithfully and directly to German from Persian and not re-translated from French or English, he could show how his philological acumen related to interpreting Khayyam’s

216 Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 113–16.

217 Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 108; Léon Poliakov, *Le mythe aryen. Essai sur les sources du racisme et des nationalismes*, 2 (Brussels: Editions Complexe, 1987); Lena Salaymeh, *The Beginnings of Islamic Law: Late Antique Islamic Legal Traditions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 90; Zia-Ebrahimi, *Emergence of Iranian Nationalism*, 100.

218 Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 147.

thought and translating this into German accurately. His presentation of Persia at the time of Khayyam's life also showed his proclivity to historical-critical analysis, basing his arguments on wide scholarly reading and sound analysis. Lastly, even if he did not reference all the names that appear in the publication of the year after, he would certainly not have avoided to drop the names of scholars in the audience (Browne and Christensen), whom he knew to have worked on Khayyam before. His talk was an academic success, as Pfungst called Rosen's translations "excellent" and Oltramare recorded that his translations were "lively appreciated" by the audience.²¹⁹

One wonders though what Goldziher would have thought or replied to Rosen's Aryan-Arabianism dualism, at a time when Goldziher was trying to get Hartmann off his Aryan obsession.²²⁰ There was some common ground between Rosen's talk and the lecture Goldziher held at the congress about the influence of neo-Platonic and Gnostic elements in the hadith. Still in Copenhagen Rosen sent Goldziher a sample of his written translation of a quatrain together with the original Khayyami ruba'i in Persian. It was the quatrain he had used to illustrate the multiple possible meanings of بندگی‌ات (subjugation, piety, devotion).²²¹ In the following years Rosen and Goldziher exchanged letters and their publications. The tone with which Rosen addressed Goldziher in those letters was that of a student addressing a teacher.²²² Goldziher appears to have taken enough interest in Rosen's lecture to have recommended Rosen to study the circumstances of Khayyam's life more thoroughly, and in Rosen's upcoming publications Goldziher became heavily referenced and the Aryan disappeared.²²³ While some participants at the congresses were unwilling or unable to revise their conceptions, others were glad to have their assumptions challenged and be disabused of faulty estimations.

Another attentive scholar in the audience was Arthur Christensen (1875–1945), who had been lending Thomsen and the other senior Orientalists a hand in organising the congress. Christensen had studied with some of the senior Orientalists in Copenhagen until 1903, when he received his doctorate for his analysis of the wandering quatrains in Khayyam's *Ruba'iyat*. Continuing on

219 Pfungst, "Orientalisten-Kongress in Kopenhagen"; Oltramare, "Congrès à Copenhague," 236.

220 L. Hanisch, *Goldziher und Hartmann*, 195, 197.

221 Friedrich Rosen to Ignaz Goldziher, August 1908, GIL/36/06/04, OC – MTA.

222 *Actes du quinzième Congrès des orientalistes*, 69; Friedrich Rosen to Ignaz Goldziher, 21 November 1910, GIL/36/06/02, OC – MTA; Friedrich Rosen to Ignaz Goldziher, 9 July 1909, GIL/36/06/03, OC – MTA.

223 Friedrich Rosen to Ignaz Goldziher, 9 July 1909, GIL/36/06/03, OC – MTA.

Zhukovskii's work by extending the corpus of quatrains, Christensen's thesis was published in Heidelberg the year after and attracted considerable scholarly attention. In 1906 Christensen published a formerly unknown philosophical essay by Khayyam.²²⁴ Christensen had studied Oriental languages with Hartmann and Andreas in Berlin and later in Göttingen and also attended the congress in Hamburg in 1902 still as a student, but Rosen and Christensen had likely not met before 1908.²²⁵

Christensen reacted positively to Rosen's talk. The two agreed that the false or attributed quatrains "nestled the spirit of Khayyam so precisely, that this gives us proof of the Rubā'ijāt of Omar Khayyam faithfully conforming to the Persian spirit." Christensen also agreed with Rosen that the quatrains were something "Persian and common to all humanity". Christensen equipped Rosen with the essay he had written about the philosopher Khayyam and provided him with the critical background of his study of the wandering quatrains, which allowed Rosen to further polish his translations and situate Khayyam in his lengthy epilogue intended to introduce the *Rubā'iyat* and their cultural setting to a German readership. Rosen paid tribute to Christensen in his 1909 publication and in all subsequent editions.²²⁶ Reading the *Sinnsprüche* Rosen had sent him the year after, Christensen praised them as "a gift to German literature, worthy of the great original... emulating the rhyme form of the rubā'i, to accentuate this poetry unique to the Persian spirit. In your translation the true Khayyam is found in all his incisiveness and all his depth, as intensely as it can possible be in a transmission to another language".²²⁷

224 Jes P. Asmussen, "Christensen, Arthur Emanuel," *Encyclopædia Iranica* V, no. 5 (2011): 521; Arthur Christensen, *Omar Khajjāms Rubā'ijāt: En litterærhistorisk undersøgelse* (Copenhagen: Siegfried Michaelsens Efterfølger, 1903).

225 Arthur Christensen, Brevkopibog 1902–3, May 1902, I 1 Utilg. 578, KB – HA; Arthur Christensen to Harbor-G., 27 November 1902, copy, I 1 Utilg. 578, KB – HA; Arthur Christensen to F. C. Andreas, 8 May 1902, copy, I 1 Utilg. 578, KB – HA; Arthur Christensen to F. C. Andreas, 27 February 1905, copy, I 1 Utilg. 578, KB – HA; Arthur Christensen to Martin Hartmann, 30 June 1906, copy, I 1 Utilg. 578, KB – HA; L.P. Elwell-Sutton, "Arthur Emanuel Christensen," *Bulletin British Society for Middle Eastern Studies* 10, no. 1 (1983): 60; L. Hanisch, *Goldziher und Hartmann*, 202–3; Mette Hedemand Søltoft, *Arthur Christensen, iransk filologi og jagten på det indoeuropæiske. En videnskabshistorisk rejse* (Copenhagen: Danish Society for Central Asia, 2007), 21.

226 Arthur Christensen to Friedrich Rosen, 1 July 1909, copy, I 1 Utilg. 578, KB – HA.

227 Arthur Christensen to Veit, 10 July 1909, copy, I 1 Utilg. 578, KB – HA; Arthur Christensen to Martin Hartmann, 10 July 1909, copy, I 1 Utilg. 578, KB – HA.

While Rosen benefitted neatly from the exchange, Christensen continued to linger in Copenhagen without a professorial chair. When the professor of religious studies Edvard Lehmann took over a position in Berlin in early 1910, Christensen asked Rosen to write a letter recommending his abilities in teaching Islam to the selection committee. But neither the letter Rosen wrote, nor the entreaties of Andreas with Thomsen to find a position for the “diligent” Christensen at Copenhagen’s university, were met with success and Christensen only became an extraordinary professor in 1919.²²⁸

3.7 A Harmonious Scholarly Congress

The congress became a success for the German government – even if a bit of intellectualising at an Orientalist congress certainly would not calm the suspicions evoked by power politics in Europe – and even more so for German scholars. The collaboration with the scholar Andreas allowed the diplomat Rosen the preparation of an opening speech that was to set the tone for a congress in which the German delegation was found front and centre. This success was not exclusively German though, but was part of an international cooperation that increased benefits for the involved parties, politically and scholarly. Collaboration was held up high and scholarship was bringing forth fruits, which all European scholars could harvest. Andreas’ participation, with his long-standing Danish relations, background knowledge and his ability to converse in Danish also helped to offset possible negative effects of German language politics or what could have been perceived as a show of force. With the Turfan expedition the German delegation and the Danish hosts had something exciting to offer to the interested public, government officials and scholars alike. German-Danish research collaboration benefited. The organisational committee and the hosts had put together a congress its participants deemed worthy and the public perceived as a stimulating affair. On an individual level, Rosen could round off his stay with presenting some of his translations of Omar Khayyam, which was warmly received as a contribution to the knowledge of the Orient, despite the diplomat’s long years of absence from academia. To his superiors back in Berlin, he could report a success story of German scholarship and portray his own diplomatic skill. No wonder then that Rosen, back to dealing with the day-to-day of the “political sorrows”

²²⁸ Arthur Christensen to Friedrich Rosen, 10 December 1909, 1906–10, ASWPC; Arthur Christensen to Friedrich Rosen, 19 February 1910, 1906–10, ASWPC; Friedrich Carl Andreas to Vilhelm Thomsen, 21 April 1910, 1 NKS 4291,4°, KB – HA; Hedemand Søltoft, *Christensen*, 59.

of the Moroccan conundrum, would write to Andreas how fondly he remembered their stay in Copenhagen and that the time they had spent there among scholarly friends was an “oasis in my existence”.²²⁹

4 International Discontinued. National Congresses and Global Scholarship

At the end of the congress in Copenhagen two locations were proposed for holding the next congress. The invitation by the Bengal government to convene in Calcutta was dismissed as impractical, although a resolution proposed by Rosen to express the scholars' gratitude to the lieutenant-governor of Bengal was duly accepted. Instead the invitation to Athens delivered by Spyridon Lambros, and towards the end of the congress backed by the Greek government despite a fragile economic situation in the country, was widely endorsed.²³⁰ The preparations for the Athens congress soon ran into troubles, as a military coup in late 1909 rattled the country and would eventually lead to the rise of the nationalist Venizelos and the diminishing in stature of the Greek monarchy.²³¹ In 1910 it looked unlikely that the congress could be held during the Easter break in 1911 and the previous congress presidents considered accepting the invitation by Egyptian Prince Fuad Pasha to relocate to the newly founded Egyptian University in Cairo.²³² Eventually, the congress was postponed to the spring of 1912 and stayed in Greece. The sixteenth International Orientalists Congress was similar in organisational structure, with a larger section than usual on Greece's relations with the Orient throughout the ages. Participation numbers were similar to those of previous congresses. The largest proportion of participants was again of the hosting country, partially because the congress coincided with the celebrations of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the National Greek University. Participation numbers from abroad were as usual high from Germany, Great Britain and its colonies, as well as Russia.²³³

229 Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 25 May 1909, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG.

230 *Actes du quinzième Congrès des orientalistes*, 82–83; Nicos P. Mouzelis, *Modern Greece: Facets of Underdevelopment* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1979), 104–7.

231 Mouzelis, *Modern Greece*, 107; Mark Mazower, “The Messiah and the Bourgeoisie: Venizelos and Politics in Greece, 1909–1912,” *Historical Journal* 35, no. 4 (1992): 885–904.

232 Angelo de Gubernatis to Vilhelm Thomsen, 28 February 1910, 8 NKS 4291,4°, KB – HA.

233 *Actes du seizième Congrès international des orientalistes. Session d'Athènes. 6–14 Avril 1912* (Athens: Imprimerie “Nestia”, 1912), 196–2002.

Rosen did not attend. Until early 1912 he had been stationed as German envoy in nearby Bucharest, but the time of the congress coincided with his move to Lisbon. Already imperilled by the vagaries of political upheaval on the Balkans, Athens saw the last International Orientalists Congress of its kind. The seventeenth session, due to take place in Oxford in September 1915, was cancelled “owing to European conditions”. For many European Orientalists, with their scholarly work dependant on that of their colleagues across borders, the war was a professional catastrophe. Congresses cancelled, mail service interrupted, and the noble task of philological exegesis sidelined, they longed for times “more normal”, as the Indologist F.E. Pargiter wrote when announcing the cancellation of the upcoming congress.²³⁴ Le Coq, who had entertained a lively correspondence with Thomsen in Denmark until the war, wrote him in 1917 that he “wistfully” longed for the day Thomsen had been decorated with the Prussian order Pour le Mérite in 1911, when “in beautiful unity all nations arrived to pay homage to you – but were it again such a joyful day.” Rosen wrote Andreas after the war that he dreamed of “a return of the beautiful days of back then in Hamburg and Copenhagen – näschtud [“not to be” in Persian]”.²³⁵

As elaborated on by Fuchs, the war led to a breakdown of the International Orientalist Congress system, and brought forth new forms of congregating across the globe.²³⁶ In the immediate post-war period some of the old relations were re-kindled. British and the German Orientalists started corresponding and exchanging books again, but the embargo placed on German as a scientific language and travel restrictions through the introduction of passports and more rigid visa regulations were a major obstacle for organising larger pan-European conventions.²³⁷ Instead, national congresses were held, such as the German Orientalistentage, and the congress system proliferated globally, finding emulation in such gatherings as the First Oriental Conference held in Poona in 1919. Explicitly basing itself on the international congresses, and with such Indian participants of the congresses in Europe as Jivanji Jamshedji Modi and Harilala Harshadraya Dhruva chairing sections, the Poona congress followed a similar structure

234 F.E. Pargiter, *Seventeenth International Congress of Orientalists at Oxford, 1915*, Bulletin (Oxford, 1915).

235 Albert von Le Coq to Vilhelm Thomsen, 21 January 1917, 14 NKS 4291,4°, KB – HA; Friedrich Rosen to F.C. Andreas, 18 November 1921, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG .

236 Fuchs, “The Politics of the Republic of Learning,” 217.

237 Franz Babinger to C.H. Becker, 27 December 1919, 40 23 VI HA NL Becker, PA AA; Ernst Herzfeld to E.G. Browne, 10 December 1920, 9, Browne Papers (8–14), CUL Manuscripts; Ernst Herzfeld to C.H. Becker, 1 March 1923, 40 23 VI HA NL Becker, PA AA; Reinbothe, *Deutsch als internationale Wissenschaftssprache*, 150.

while emphasising Indian topics.²³⁸ The international system fizzling out into its national components, scholarly exchange in the national fora of Oriental studies saw an influx of scholars from outside Europe, who contributed to European scholarly debates and transported knowledge back to their countries of origin. Oriental studies looked less international and more fragmented on the surface, but the search for that light of truth continued to pull Orientalists together from far and wide, now with an intensified participation of scholars from the countries of inquiry, who would often pick up on the work of their European colleagues of the pre-war era and incorporate elements of the European international in the national readings of their own pasts.

The often conjured “harmony” or “unity” of scholars of all nations, predominantly European nations to be sure, and non-political nature of the congress, amid very real international conflicts, was not only a mantra for scholars. The non-confrontational language employed was rather an expression of a space of discourse that was not independent from the machinations and support of politics, but allowed for a flexibility of thought and debate, that could challenge and transcend political, ethnical and religious boundaries. Like the expeditions prepared and celebrated in Hamburg and Copenhagen, the congresses were dependant on the imperial systems, but they were not determining grand-schemed world politics, nor could Orientalists insert themselves into every imperial enterprise they liked, as was the case with the Baghdad railway. At times international cooperation worked for scholars, at others scholars thought it wiser to go it alone or utilise international competition in bargaining with their governments for support. Rosen’s sugar-coating of Germany’s participation in Copenhagen having been beneficial for German-Scandinavian relations should be read as precisely that – sugar-coating. Large-scale international political prerogatives were left unaffected by what went on at the “grand seats of Orientalist” congregation, as Rabault-Feuerhahn calls them.²³⁹ Collaboration was also possible when relations between two countries were testy, as was the case between Germany and France, as exemplified by the inclusion of Chavennes in the German Turfan project, or an exchange sparked by the congress in Copenhagen between Rosen and the director of *École spéciale des langues orientales vivantes* in Paris, Paul Boyer, about starting an exchange programme with the SOS in Berlin. As in this last instance,

238 Giara, *Modi. An Illustrated Biography*, 12; Dhruva, *Orientalist Congress of 1889*; P.D. Gune, ed., *Proceedings & Transactions of the First Oriental Conference, Poona. Held on the 5th, 6th and 7th of November 1919* (Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute Poona, 1920), 2, 96–100.

239 Rabault-Feuerhahn, “Congrès des orientalistes.”

such initiatives often came to naught, but not because of the Orientalists.²⁴⁰ Often enough scholars across national divides worked together, because they knew that exchanging on the international level and ornamenting themselves with such exchanges helped them with their scholarship on the national level. This was the case with Andreas gaining a chair at Göttingen, but did not come to fruition with Christensen in Copenhagen, and was the usual procedure of the congresses when scholars intended to intrigue their international colleagues in their projects of dictionaries, encyclopaedias, or large-scale translations, and by extension hoped to secure government or private funding.

For such transnational figures as Thomsen, relations with scholars, publishers and governments abroad were downright imperative, as the small scene of academia in Denmark depended on the larger markets of ideas and money available for academia in countries like Germany or Russia. Intellectual conflicts were fought out at the congresses, and discourses infused with new research findings were critically acclaimed or rejected. Such was the case with the Aryan myth, spreading and contracting in the cases of Haupt and Andreas respectively, formulated in Iranian nationalist anti-Arab mould by Rosen, or deeply unsettled by the findings of the Turfan expeditions. In most lectures antiquity was the focus, as the contemporaneous and practical surfaced but were largely ignored.

The congresses at the beginning of the twentieth century in Hamburg and Copenhagen were dominated by German Oriental studies, but also the preceding assembly in Rome in 1899, the interceding congress at Algiers in 1905, and the last congress before the Great War in Athens in 1912 saw a large contribution of scholars emerging out of or interacting in a German context. At Copenhagen the Germans went so far as to make a show out of the sheer size of their delegation. Considering the centrality of German Orientalistik in this integrated international Orientalist system of interaction and the for the practicalities of foreign politics in the Orient predominantly useless research topics tackled at these congregations, it is questionable if too strong of a connection of Orient politics and Orient scholarship – constituting a disciplining system of Orientalism – can be established.

The politics of the congresses in the early twentieth century were by and large forms of soft culture politics and location politics, as was particularly the case in the drive for a university led by Melle and Behrmann in Hamburg, but also in Copenhagen, Athens and Algiers. Attracting the world, shimmering in its splendour and being associated with the latest findings about the origins

240 Paul Boyer to Friedrich Rosen, 26 May 1909, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen to Paul Boyer, 1 June 1909, copy, ASWPC.

of mankind was not a bad way to promote a city and its institutions of learning. In Algiers that produced a more dominant colonialist streak, whereas in Hamburg and Copenhagen, the focus was more on the unity of mankind and the enlightenment the Orient offered. Particularly in Hamburg this was marked by a sense of humility by the organisers that bordered on sentiments of inferiority. This did not mean that scholars from the extra-European world were specifically accommodated at the congress, but if they conformed to the disciplines their participation counted as much as that of the “internal-Orientals” Goldziher or Andreas. The leading ideas of “*ex Oriente lux*” versus the decadence and pre-modernity of the Orient were both present and seen together at the congresses, but were mostly corollary to the philological search of human origins. It was this dialectics of looking to the distant human past while galloping into modernity that was the goblet of Ambrosia, travelling from congress to congress, from which to drink was sacrament. Dealing with the living Orient, which he saw crumbling before his eyes in Morocco, for the diplomat Rosen this world of Oriental scholarship served as a refuge from the realities of European Orient politics.

Chapter 6

Omar Khayyam's *Ruba'iyat* and Rumi's *Masnavi* Interpreted. The Politics and Scholarship of Translating Persian Poetry

1 Truth and Poetry of Two Persian Poets

In 1072, the young philosopher Omar Khayyam entered the Central Asian capital of scholarship Samarkand. As he walked through the city, he found a mob assaulting a student of the great philosopher Ibn Sina (Avicenna). Khayyam intervened to save the student. But his reputation as a philosopher and poet of heretic materialist verses had preceded Khayyam and when the crowd discovered who he was, they turned on him and roughed him up. Khayyam was then brought before Samarkand's leading qadi (judge/magistrate), Abu Taher. Instead of condemning the philosopher, who challenged the strictures of orthodox theology, Abu Taher recognised his intellect, but warned Khayyam of uttering his critical poetry openly. The qadi handed the philosopher a beautiful notebook into which he should write his witty and thought-provoking quatrains, instead of speaking his poems openly and thereby endangering his own safety. This notebook was to become the manuscript that marked the beginning of the *Ruba'iyat* of Omar Khayyam, which would gain global fame in the nineteenth century and become for decades the second most printed book in the English speaking world after the Bible.

This is how Amin Maalouf has it in the opening of his historic fiction novel *Samarcande*.¹ In a review a few years later, Rashid noted that "Omar Khayyam is treated like a medieval Salman Rushdie", only that back in the Middle Ages, during the days of glorious scientific Islam, he was not condemned to death by the orthodoxy but protected by an Islamic jurist.² The almost simultaneous publication of *Samarcande* and Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* in 1988 preclude Maalouf from having been influenced by Khomeini's infamous fatwa against the British Indian author a year later, but Rashid's commentary points to the rise of political Islam and its growing intolerance of contrarian views in the 1980s, which had also seen the ban of Khayyam's *Ruba'iyat* in Iran after the revolution in 1979.³ Maa-

1 Amin Maalouf, *Samarcande* (Paris: Jean-Claude Lattès, 1988), 4–17.

2 Ahmed Rashid, "Poetry Lovers Tricked by a Drowned Manuscript: Samarkand – Amin Maalouf," *The Independent*, 21 September 1992.

3 The ban was largely lifted under Khatami (1997–2005). In the early 2000s Khayyam was portrayed by the Iranian state as a religious figure who fought against superstition, ignorance

loulf's hero Omar Khayyam in contrast stood for an epoch in which Islam was synonymous with science, poetry, and when a measure of protection of literary freedom existed.

Maalouf's story of Khayyam and the *Ruba'iyat* is skilfully narrated and his portrayal is accurate in three regards: 1) the life dates of the philosopher Khayyam and his period of study in Samarkand under the protection of Abu Taher; 2) the portrayal of Khayyam as a philosopher in the tradition of Ibn Sina; 3) the intellectual appeal and aversion to orthodoxy in the vexing quatrains. But the beginnings of the manuscript of the *Ruba'iyat* that Maalouf crafts never were. It is, in fact, very unlikely that the historic Omar Khayyam, the renowned philosopher, astronomer and algebraist, ever was the poet and author of a significant corpus of poetry, not to speak of the over one thousand quatrains, which brought him posthumous global fame. The fusion of the *Ruba'iyat* attributed to Khayyam and the actually proven philosophical tracts of Khayyam in *Samarcande* is emblematic of many artistic reproductions and some of the non-fiction reception of Khayyam as a philosopher-poet since the nineteenth century.⁴ The witty and contemplative *Ruba'iyat* in conjunction with the evocative life and work of the eleventh to twelfth century mathematician-philosopher have been offering rich material to be incorporated into new, contemporary narratives. The most important modern embedding of Khayyam occurred when in 1859, the Englishman Edward FitzGerald published his interpretation of the *Ruba'iyat* as an exotic Epicurean escape from stifling Victorian ennui, which gave rise to a global following of those afflicted with fin de siècle decadence and cynicism. The popularity of the *Ruba'iyat* and their mysterious and contested origins also attracted scholarly attention and debate and Friedrich Rosen's presentation in Copenhagen on Omar Khayyam's worldview in 1908 reflected the prominence Khayyam had gained in academic research.

Rosen's translation of the *Ruba'iyat* into *Die Sinnsprüche Omars des Zelt-machers* was one among hundreds. But Rosen's direct and largely faithful translation from Persian to German, accompanied by a comprehensive introduction to the times, life and philosophy of Omar Khayyam, was the most significant for popularising the *Ruba'iyat* for a German-reading audience and remains the can-

and spiritual darkness. "Ayatollah Sentences Author to Death," *BBC*, 14 February 1989; Peter Murtagh, "Rushdie in Hiding After Ayatollah's Death Threat," *Guardian*, 15 February 1989; Jos Coumans, *The Rubáiyât of Omar Khayyâm. An Updated Bibliography* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2010), 16.

⁴ Michael Hamilton Morgan, *Lost History. The Enduring Legacy of Muslim Scientists, Thinkers and Artists* (Washington: National Geographic, 2007), 107–10; Gerhard Schweizer, *Der unbekannte Islam. Sufismus – die religiöse Herausforderung* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2007), 133.

onical translation today. Rosen, his *Sinnsprüche* and their popularity in German lands have so far been neglected in Western scholarly debates about the global resonance of the *Ruba'iyat* and Khayyam. Beyond remedying this black hole in German literary studies that arose out of the adverse circumstances of the Nazi and post-war periods, Rosen's knowledge production speaks to a larger history of German Persophilia, as formulated by Dabashi.⁵ Enabled and influenced by his movement and encounters along the arteries of the British Empire, his diplomatic career and his experience of messy German Weltpolitik, Rosen embedded his *Sinnsprüche* in a cultural reading of the Persianate and the wider Islamic world with which he intended to portray a Middle East full of different intellectual currents between free-thinking and oppression that were reflective of the human condition and in the shape of Khayyam's *Ruba'iyat* part of world literature.

Although Khayyam was recognised as a philosopher and the *Ruba'iyat* well-liked among Persian speakers, before the *Ruba'iyat* developed a mass following in the West through FitzGeraldian popularisation Khayyam was traditionally not considered one of the most important Persian poets. A poet central to the canon of Persian literature, philosophy, spirituality and religion, also before his de-Islamicisation in Western translations in the twentieth century, was Jalal ed-Din Muhammad Rumi.⁶ Along with two other updated republications of his father on Persian language and literature from the mid-nineteenth century, in 1913 Rosen re-issued Georg Rosen's 1849 translation of Rumi's *Masnavi*, an extensive mystical poem of 26,000 double verses considered a cornerstone of Sufi Islam.⁷ Friedrich Rosen introduced his father's German translation with a lengthy de-

5 Sol Gittleman, "The Reception of Edward FitzGerald's Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam in England and Germany," (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1961); Joachim Wohlleben, "Die Rubajat des Omar Chajjam und die deutsche Literatur. Eine glücklose Begegnung," *Literaturwissenschaftliches Jahrbuch* 12 (1971–1903): 43–96; Mehdi Aminrazavi, *The Wine of Wisdom. The Life, Poetry and Philosophy of Omar Khayyam* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2005); Jos Coumans, "An 'Umar Khayyām Database," in *The Great 'Umar Khayyām. A Global Reception of the Rubāiyyāt*, A.A. Seyed-Gohrab (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2012), 245–52; Jos Biegstraaten, "Khayyam, Omar Xiv. Impact on Literature and Society in the West," *Encyclopædia Iranica*, 15 December 2008. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/khayyam-omar-impact-west>; Sayed Fayruz Abadi, "Iranology in Germany [in Persian]," *Bukhara Arts and Culture Journal*, 2020/ May 2011, 160–75; Dabashi, *Persophilia*, 141–47.

6 Annemarie Schimmel, *Maulāna Dschelāladdin Rūmī. Aus dem Diwan* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2015), 5; Rasmus Elling, "Taking the Islam Out of It," *Naqd. Tisdsskrift for Mellemøsternes Litteratur* 5 (2003): 24–50; Rozina Ali, "The Erasure of Islam from the Poetry of Rumi," *New Yorker*, 5 January 2017.

7 Sari Abdallah Efendi, *Tuti-Nameh*; Georg Rosen, *Elementa Persica*; Rosen and Rosen, *Elementa Persica*.

scription of the mystical poetry of the Sufi Rumi, based on his own studies and encounters in Iran, India, Turkey and Berlin. Complementary to Rosen's Khayyam, his Rumi provides a reading that was more central to Rosen's understanding of the Islamic world, his political actions and his personal affinities. Sufi Islam, Rosen posited, had been maligned and overlooked in Europe but by necessity stood at the centre of organic development in the Muslim world.

In both cases straddling the line between domesticating and foreignising Khayyam and Rumi, Rosen attempted to familiarise his German audience with the culture and historical context around the source texts, while seeking to render into German the rhythm and idiosyncracies of the original poetry.⁸ What follows then is an analysis of these paratexts of Rosen's translated publications of Khayyam and Rumi. Rosen's Khayyam is analysed in political and scholarly context. Why did Rosen translate the *Ruba'iyat*? Who was his Khayyam and what ideas permeated in his *Sinnsprüche*? This is situated in how Rosen's work in politics shaped and influenced his translation of poetry and which scholarly inputs and other sources he drew on since he first came upon the *Ruba'iyat* in India. The discussion of Rosen's Rumi focuses on Rosen's programmatic foreword and what political message he aimed to deliver through this poetic work.

2 Omar Khayyam's Life and Scholarship

Ghiyath ad-Din Abu'l Fath Omar ibn Ibrahim Khayyam was born in the city of Nishapur in Khurasan on 18 May 1048 (439 AH).⁹ Although from a poor family, Khayyam became a pupil at the city's madrasa (school), where he studied amongst others the works of Ibn Sina (980–1037). In Nishapur, Khayyam was acquainted with theologian, philosopher and mystic Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazali (1058–1111), and became known as a religious authority and leader in prayer in the city, carrying the honorific title of imam. It has been suggested that al-Ghazali studied with Khayyam and Aminrazavi speculates that al-Ghazali's landmark *The Incoherence of the Philosophers* is in part a response to Khayyam's philosophising.¹⁰

⁸ Nina Zandjani, "Saadi's Perception of the West and German Translators' Perception of Iran in Saadi's *Gulistan* (The Rose Garden)," in *Iran and the West. Cultural Perceptions from the Sasanian Empire to the Islamic Republic*, Margaux Whiskin and David Bagot (London: IB Tauris, 2018), 75.

⁹ A.A. Seyed-Gohrab, "Khayyām's Universal Appeal: Man, Wine and the Hereafter in the Quatrains," in *The Great 'Umar Khayyām. A Global Reception of the Rubā'iyāt*, A.A. Seyed-Gohrab (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2012), 11.

¹⁰ Aminrazavi, *Wine of Wisdom*, 19–23.

A legend that found much resonance was Khayyam having gone to school with Hassan Tusi, who would later become the Nizam al-Mulk (governor) of Iran, and Hassan Sabah, the founder of the Hashashin (the assassins of the Nizari Isma'ili sect). In Iranian nationalist circles the notion is entertained that the three fought an Iranian war of resistance together against the Seljuk Turks as a tricolour of politics, military, and scholarship.¹¹ In fact, the Persian Nizam al-Mulk was instrumental in the expansion of the Turkic Seljuk Empire, bringing Perso-Turkish culture to the borders of China and the Byzantine Empire. Khayyam and Nizam al-Mulk were close and it was on the Nizam al-Mulk's behest that Khayyam travelled to Isfahan, where he took up teaching at the Nizamiyyah, one of a series of institutes of higher learning set up under the Nizam al-Mulk.¹² After Sultan Alp Arslan's death in 1072, his successor Jalal ed-Din Malik Shah asked Khayyam to calculate a new calendar. The calendar, based on astronomical observations in Isfahan and Marv, was known for its accuracy and remained in use until the first half of the twentieth century. At Isfahan Khayyam studied Euclid, Apollonius and other Greek philosophers. When his protectors Nizam al-Mulk and Sultan Jalal ed-Din Malik Shah died one after the other in 1092, the infighting of successors destabilised the Seljuk Empire. Khayyam went on the hajj to Mecca. It has been suggested that some contemporaries accused Khayyam of heresy and questioned his faith on account of his philosophical studies, prompting his pilgrimage amid the loss of his protectors. Later years saw Khayyam in Marv under the protection of Sultan Sanjar and back in Nishapur, where he worked on mathematical and philosophical questions until his death on 4 December 1131.¹³

Khayyam wrote fourteen treatises. These included – thematically as dates are uncertain – works on mathematical relationships within musical notes, mathematical problems following Euclid, algebra (resulting in an important primer for centuries), and weighing alloys of different precious metals. In the following centuries recognition of Khayyam's scientific work in the Islamic world spread, with the historian Ibn Khaldun in the fourteenth century praising him as the greatest geometrician in history. Although the algebraist Khayyam was known in Europe by 1742, he was overshadowed by Latin translations of

11 Christian H. Rempis, *Neue Beiträge zur Chajjām-Forschung* (Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1943), 3.

12 C. Edmund Bosworth, "Nizāmiyya," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, P. Bearman et al. (2012); Jan Rypka, "History of Persian Literature up to the Beginning of the 20th Century," in *History of Iranian Literature*, Jan Rypka et al. (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1968), 183.

13 S. Frederick Starr, *Lost Enlightenment. Central Asia's Golden Age from the Arab Conquest to Tamerlane*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 395–407; Seyed-Gohrab, "Khayyām's Universal Appeal," 11.

Muhammad ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi, incidentally translated by Friedrich Rosen's uncle Friedrich August Rosen in 1831. Khayyam's mathematical works only became available in Europe in French translation by Franz Woepcke in 1851.¹⁴

A translation of Ibn Sina's *Lucid Discourse on Unity* from Arabic to Persian set off his philosophical works that follow the peripatetic (Aristotelian) philosophical tradition. Khayyam centred on questions of being and necessity (What is? What is it? Why is it?), the necessity of contradiction in the world, as well as determinism and subsistence. These philosophical deliberations had theological implications, as Khayyam posited that merciful God could not be the source of evil, but that in a monotheistic world there were no other beings from which evil could emanate (the question of theodicy). Khayyam grappled with determinism and free will, problems of unity and multiplicity, and whether existence or essence came first. In a treatise on the question of *Universal Knowledge*, also known as *Treatise on Transcendence in Existence*, Khayyam categorised the different seekers for truth, indicating that he found the methods applied by the Sufis most promising, in comparison to those of the theologians, the philosophers and the Isma'ili sect.¹⁵

3 Poetic Form and Themes of the *Ruba'iyat*

What are the *Ruba'iyat* and what is a ruba'i? A ruba'i, from the Arabic four, is a short poem in quatrain form (German: Vierzeiler) pioneered in medieval Iran and common in Persian, Arabic and Urdu. In comparison to the more complex ghazal (typically a love poem), qasida (an elegy or ode), mathnawi (human or divine romance), the ruba'i is characterised by its brevity and simplicity. The Khayyami *Ruba'iyat* are typically written in aaba rhyme form, sometimes in aaaa. A ruba'i is "graphically arranged in two columns and separated by a visual caesura", usually comes in a 13-syllable (but also 12-, 11- or 10-syllable) with the meter usually looking like this:

¹⁴ Daoud S. Kasir, *The Algebra of Omar Khayyam* (New York: Bureau of Publications Teachers College, 1931), 3–6; Muhammad Ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi, *The Algebra of Mohammed Ben Musa*, trans. and ed. Frederic Rosen, (London: Oriental Translation Fund, 1831); 'Umar b. Ibrahim al-Khayyami, *Risāla fī sharḥ mā ashkala min muṣādarāt kitāb Uqlīdis* [in Arabic], 1218/1219 [615 AH], 75a–100b, Leiden codex Or. 199 (8), UBL.

¹⁵ Mehdi Aminrazavi and Glen Van Brummelen, "Umar Khayyam," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Edward N. Zalta (2017). <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2017/entries/umar-khayyam/>.

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The Khayyami *Ruba'iyat* distinguish themselves by their pugnacity, expressed in short poetic form. Wohlleben explains:

Line one opens with a statement, expanded upon in line two, forming a doublet, which finds expression in a rhyme pair [a-a]. The poem is halfway there. In line three a thought enters that betrays knowledge of the preceding doublet, but attempting to deny or challenge the previous statement it offers a counter-thesis [ending on b]. This challenge is a powerful tool to further develop the poem into a direction that the initial premise had not foreseen. The unsuspected and audacious appearance in line three relentlessly exposes the dangerous, destructive, senseless, ridiculous or sad content of the opening statement. The exposure becomes inescapable, as line four [ending on a] then re-establishes the direct reference to the apparently abandoned initial premise [in a-a]... The recurring rhyme of line four [a] creates a surprise, as it disappoints the expectation of the continuation of the rhyme of line three [b] and... through the resounding harmony of this re-appearance [a again after b, connecting with the initial a-a] forces a shocking realisation of a deeper rooted incongruence of the nature of things. Tone and sense of the words are antagonistic, and this is intentional with Omar Khayyam¹⁷

For example:

Zuerst hatt' ich mein Ich noch nicht erkannt,
 Zuletzt zerschneid'st Du des Bewusstseins Band.
 Da dies von Anfang Deine Absicht war,
 Was macht'st Du mich erst mit mir selbst bekannt?¹⁸

At first I had not recognised myself,
 At last you cut up the cord of consciousness.
 Since this was your intention all along,
 why do you make me know myself at all?"

This aaba rhyme form, relayed here in Rosen's translation, is typical in the Khayyami *Ruba'iyat*. The third line ends in b and creates a new angle or impetus of the poem's content. This is then continued, culminated and concluded in line four, despite the rhyme form tying line four back to the outset of the poem, and thus creating a tension and release that is usually thought-provoking or humor-

16 F.D. Lewis, "Rubā'ī," in *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, 4, Roland Greene et al. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 1227.

17 Joachim Wohlleben, Omar Chajjam, das Rubai und die deutsche Literatur. Ein Fall von glückloser Begegnung, 1968, corrected manuscript, 149/1136, GSA, 12–13.

18 Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 44; Wohlleben, Chajjam, corrected manuscript, 12.

istic. A Khayyami ruba'i is thus a very short form of poetry of not unsurmountable complexity, not entirely uniform in style, but easily recognisable in junction with its built-in disaccord.

In the Khayyami *Ruba'iyat* – in that vast corpus of all Persian quatrains attributed to Omar Khayyam – eight general topics, based loosely on the categories of Aminrazavi and Van Brummelen, are contemplated: 1) the impermanence of life; 2) the quest for the meaning of life; 3) how there can be evil in a world created by God, who is supposed to be good; 4) fate and free will; 5) the here and now and wine and love; 6) learning, knowledge and wisdom; 7) God and belief; and 8) the afterlife. Life of fleeting impermanence and the afterlife uncertain, the *Ruba'iyat* ponder the reasons of life and what it all means. As fate mostly prevails and all is coming from and given to God, including all evil, we grapple and contend with this simultaneous originator, interlocutor and judge. Yet, there is also learning and wisdom, even if it remains limited and not always relevant. And there is wine, joy and love, the ultimate meaning and sense, even if contradictory to the word of God; the literal nature of these words not being clear. For after all, God has made evil, sin, learning, wine, and amid the inescapable fate of death and the penultimate uncertainty over what comes then, it is in the joys of love and the moment that meaning is to be found. Joy can also be found in wisdom, love in God, and while birth and death are certain fates, action is not entirely fated.

Wine and the pot from which it is drunk lend themselves to interpretations that go vastly beyond Epicurean notions of *carpe diem* into a mystical approach to God and his creation. It is not necessarily God that is challenged in the *Ruba'iyat*, but the strictures that faith and scholars of faith prescribe. As Aminrazavi and Van Brummelen note, “*Khīrad* (wisdom) is the type of wisdom that brings about a rapprochement between the poetic and discursive modes of thought, one that sees the fundamental irony in what appears to be a senseless human existence within an orderly and complex physical universe.”¹⁹ Specific *Ruba'iyat* usually deal with two to four of the aforementioned concepts, as they tend to overlap in the author's thought. As poems are open to interpretation, the concrete categorisation and labelling of contents is to a degree arbitrary. Specific phrasings can be read in differing ways, making the arguably Epicurean a matter of belief or wisdom (take wine for example). Rypka found in the *Ruba'iyat* a “Proteus-like diversity in ideas”.²⁰ In their brevity the *Ruba'iyat* spark doubt, question and sat-

¹⁹ Aminrazavi and Van Brummelen, “Umar Khayyam.”

²⁰ Aminrazavi and Van Brummelen, “Umar Khayyam”; Rypka, “Persian Literature up to the 20th Century,” 192.

irise, offering at once an alleviating smirk. This can also infuse the *Ruba'iyat* with a rebellious trait. As Aminrazavi notes, Khayyam cannot just be read as “a frustrated poet expressing his bewilderment with the riddles of life, but as a form of resistance expressed philosophically and poetically against the forces of darkness who were intent on imposing their version of religion.”²¹

4 *Ruba'iyat* Into the World and Back

By the time Friedrich Rosen left the Middle East and returned to Germany in 1900, the Khayyami *Ruba'iyat* had already transcended the realms of the Persianate world. With European scholars collecting manuscripts, where empire brought them, a Shiraz compilation of 158 Khayyami *Ruba'iyat* from 1460 found its way to the Bodleian Library at Oxford in 1844. From this manuscript and another manuscript of Khayyami *Ruba'iyat* discovered in the library of the Asiatic Society in Calcutta the professor of Persian, Sanskrit and English at Oxford and Calcutta Edward Byles Cowell made copies for his friend Edward Fitzgerald (1809–1883), who lived in the English province of Suffolk. Born into a wealthy Anglo-Irish family, Fitzgerald was a bit of a recluse, in the habit of reading historic correspondences, and never travelled further east than Paris. During a period of personal crisis the study of foreign literatures with his friend Cowell gave Fitzgerald a respite, and he found solace in translating the *Ruba'iyat*.²² In 1859 he published seventy-five translated *Ruba'iyat* under the title *Rubā'iyāt of Omar Khayyām* – at first to little success in a period of utilitarian optimism. Only some members of the pre-Raphaelite group took a liking to Fitzgerald's *Ruba'iyat*, reading it “as a reaction against the scientific spirit”. Widespread acclaim brought about a first republication in an extended form (110 quatrains) only a decade later. Further reworked editions of 101 quatrains appeared until a last posthumous publication in 1889. Twenty more editions were published by 1900.²³

21 Mehdi Aminrazavi, “Reading the Rubā'īyyāt as ‘Resistance Literature’,” in *The Great ‘Umar Khayyām. A Global Reception of the Rubā'īyāt*, A.A. Seyed-Gohrab (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2012), 51.

22 Dick Davis, “FitzGerald, Edward,” *Encyclopædia Iranica* X, no. 1 (31 December 2015 2012): 8–12.

23 Esmail Z. Behtash, “The Reception of FitzGerald's Rubā'īyāt of ‘Umar Khayyām by the Victorians,” in *The Great ‘Umar Khayyām. A Global Reception of the Rubā'īyāt*, A.A. Seyed-Gohrab (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2012), 205; Arthur J. Arberry, *Omar Khayyām. A New Version Based upon Recent Discoveries* (London: John Murray, 1952), 7.

Khayyam and Persian were a passing infatuation for FitzGerald and he saw the *Ruba'iyat* as a source text to be artistically interpreted, rather than accurately translated. While maintaining the aaba rhyme form of the Persian original, FitzGerald strung the thematically unsorted quatrains into a narrative series of quatrains along “the day of a quietist sceptic whose solace for the sorrows of the world is the *carpe diem* pleasures of drinking and like-minded companionship”, as Davis noted. Maintaining much of the content of the original *Ruba'iyat* manuscripts in general, FitzGerald was rather liberal when it came to single quatrains, often fusing ideas from different poems, cutting out parcels of meaning, or including content for stylistic effect, to make “composite quatrains” more exotic, priggish, comprehensible, or fitting to the overall narrative.²⁴ In the later editions some quatrains were entirely of FitzGerald’s making, but it can be argued that they were inspired by the Khayyami *Ruba'iyat*.

FitzGerald had not been the only or first to translate Khayyami *Ruba'iyat* to a European language. The prosaic rendering in *Les Quatrains de Khayam* by Jean-Baptiste Nicolas, who had served as dragoman to the French legation in Tehran and as consul in Resht in the 1860s, offers a notable contrast to FitzGerald’s poem. Published in 1863 as a selection of 50 quatrains, Nicolas’ *Quatrains de Khayam* was in 1867 expanded to 464 quatrains in French and Persian side-by-side.²⁵ Not approaching in artistic quality to FitzGerald’s work, Nicolas offered a less intently curated and more content-rich collection. Unlike FitzGerald Nicolas did not make Khayyam a blanket sceptic of religion or rejecting all notions of Sufism or spirituality. It fell to this bilingual copy by Nicolas to provide the source text of many new translations of the *Ruba'iyat* into various European languages, although the translations were often from Nicolas’ French rather than from the Persian.

While the translation of the Frenchman found a readership, FitzGerald’s shorter selection – an art work in its own right and included in the canon of English literature – saw the vastest proliferation of the *Ruba'iyat*. Although at first ignored, the “distinctive and paradoxical” sense of inescapability and exoticism in FitzGerald’s work, celebrating the “absolute conviction that no convictions can be absolute”, fascinated Victorian fin de siècle Great Britain.²⁶ At the turn of the century technological advances in the printing industry saw the large scale introduction of colour-illustrated books at affordable prices, enabling the

24 Davis, “FitzGerald, Edward”; Edward FitzGerald, *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám* (Edinburgh: T.N. Foulis, 1905); Gittleman, “FitzGerald’s Rubaiyat and Germany,” 10.

25 Jean-Baptiste Nicolas, *Les quatrains de Khayam* (Paris: Benjamin Duprat, 1863); Jean-Baptiste Nicolas, *Les quatrains de Khayam* (Paris: L’Imprimerie Impériale, 1867).

26 Davis, “FitzGerald, Edward.”

art of the gift book to flourish. This further promoted the spread of FitzGerald's *Ruba'iyat* in various colourised editions with miniature paintings – at first in the Great Britain, but also in the United States and India.²⁷

Khayyam became a global brand. The *Ruba'iyat* inspired spin-offs like *The Golfer's Rubáiyát*, *Rubáiyát of a Motor Car* or *Rubaiyyat of a Persian Kitten*. There were hedonist Omar Khayyam clubs, serving “poulet Omar” to elites in London and Boston and the imperialist FitzGerald was celebrated for conquering the effeminate Oriental Khayyam. Broad-sheet advertisements for Shakespeare-Omar 2-in-1 deals were printed in high-brow US magazines and from Madras pirated copies of FitzGeraldian *Ruba'iyat* circulated in India. Khayyam was used by a New York liquor store to ridicule Alcoholics Anonymous, on “chocolate, perfume, facial cream, fountain pens, letter paper, tomb stone inscriptions etc. etc.”, and in Egypt the Gianacis winery emblazoned its bobal and sultanine blanche varieties with the poet-philosopher.²⁸ Beyond the popular and mundane the *Ruba'iyat* in the guise of FitzGerald also came to influence poets, authors and singers such as Mark Twain, Ezra Pound, Oscar Wilde, T.S. Elliot, Jack Kerouac, Umm Kulthum, Muhammad Abd al Wahhab and Charles Aznavour. The adaptation of the original aaba rhyme caused a proliferation of the ruba'i form in English poetry, finding reflection for instance in Robert Frost's 1922 *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*, which the reporter Sid Davis would later read in his radio coverage of the aftermath of John F. Kennedy's assassination.²⁹

27 William H. Martin and Sandra Mason, “The Illustration of FitzGerald's *Rubáiyát* and Its Contribution to Enduring Popularity,” in *FitzGerald's Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám. Popularity and Neglect*, Adrian Poole, Christine van Ruymbeke, and William H. Martin, Sandra Mason (London: Anthem Press, 2011), 235–43.

28 Michelle Kaiserlian, “The Imagined Elites of the Omar Khayyám Club,” in *FitzGerald's Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám. Popularity and Neglect*, Adrian Poole et al. (London: Anthem Press, 2011), 147–55; Wohlleben, Chajjam, corrected manuscript, 7; S.R. Graham and Geoffrey T. Hellman, “Promotion,” *New Yorker*, 27 August 1949, 17. Christian H. Rempis, *Die Vierzeiler ‘Omar Chajjāms in der Auswahl und Anordnung Edward FitzGeralds aus dem Persischen verdeutscht* (Tübingen: Verlag der Deutschen Chajjām-Gesellschaft, 1933), 10; “Omar Khayyam White,” in *Drinkies. The Beverage Shop*. <http://drinkies.net/Drinkies-Products/Drinkies-Wine/Drinkies-White/Drinkies-Omar-Khayyam-White.aspx>.

29 Marta Simidchieva, “Fitzgerald's *Rubáiyát* and Agnosticism,” in *FitzGerald's Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám. Popularity and Neglect*, Adrian Poole et al. (London: Anthem Press, 2011), 56–67; Lillian Ross, “The Face of Anybody,” *New Yorker*, 6 April 1963, 33; Seyed-Gohrab, “Khayyām's Universal Appeal,” 31; Lesley Lawton, “Fixed Forms,” in *An Introduction to Poetry in English*, Éric Doumerc and Wendy Harding (Toulouse: Presse universitaires du Mirail, 2007), 34–35; “2 Reporters Recall the Assassination That Shocked the World,” *National Public Radio*, 22 November 2013.

Until this global popularisation in the first half of the twentieth century “Khayyām was known in Persia as a minor poet but a major scientist, but the worldwide recognition of the *Rubáiyát*, increased his popularity as a poet in Persia”, observes Seyed-Gohrab.³⁰ The re-popularisation of the Khayyami *Ruba'iyat* in Iran experienced a strong push by the modernist Iranian author Sadeq Hedayat (1903–1951), who thought, in the words of Valling Pedersen, that “life is essentially empty and meaningless. There is no God or transcendental system to fill the void”. As Khazrai notes, Hedayat’s “highest inspiration from Khayyam was... the view that ‘life is a cruel joke’”.³¹ Hedayat published a version of the *Taranye-Hay Khayyam* (Songs of Khayyam) in Persian in 1934, for which FitzGerald’s poem was a source of inspiration and in which Hedayat sought to present European studies of Khayyam to an Iranian public. Contrary to the *carpe diem* world of Victorian England though, for the avant-gardist Hedayat, whose 1936 masterpiece *The Blind Owl* combines “folkloristic echoes” of the *Ruba'iyat* and the “social dissent” of Omar Khayyam, the medieval poet-philosopher described a cruel world. On the ruins of its ridiculous and redundant traditions, Hedayat thought, something new should be built. Dabashi goes so far in arguing that Hedayat was quintessentially influenced by Khayyam’s nihilism, embedded in Islamophobia and notions of dissidence found in the *Ruba'iyat*, which would in turn come to form the elements that informed the anti-Islamic Pahlavi regime and the nihilism of Khomeini’s Islamic revolution, but constituted also the “seeds of defiant hope” found in the cinema of the late Abbas Kiarostami.³² Next to a re-introduction to Iran, the Khayyami *Ruba'iyat* were also popularised in Anglo-Indian circles through such figures as the Celtologist Whitley Stokes. However, as Cole demonstrates, the *Ruba'iyat* had enjoyed popularity in India at the Mogul courts since the fifteenth century and continued to be published

30 Seyed-Gohrab, “Khayyām’s Universal Appeal,” 12.

31 Claus Valling Pedersen, *World View in Pre-Revolutionary Iran. Literary Analysis of Five Iranian Authors in the Context of the History of Ideas* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2002), 103; Firoozeh Khazrai, “Satire in *Hajji Aqa*,” in Sadeq Hedayat. *His Work and His Wondrous World*, Homa Katouzian (London: Routledge, 2008), 103.

32 Sadeq Hedayat, *Taranye-hay Khayyam [in Persian]* (Tehran: Darmatabai Roshnaii, 1934); Sadeq Hedayat, *Die blinde Eule*, trans. Gerd Henninger (Bonn: Goethe & Hafis, 2016); Coumans, *Rubáiyát Bibliography*, 16; Marta Simidchieva, “Sadeq Hedayat and the Classics. The Case of *The Blind Owl*,” in Sadeq Hedayat. *His Work and His Wondrous World*, Homa Katouzian (London: Routledge, 2008), 22; Nasrin Rahimieh, “Hedayat’s Translations of Kafka and the Logic of Iranian Modernity,” in Sadeq Hedayat. *His Work and His Wondrous World*, Homa Katouzian (London: Routledge, 2008), 133; Dabashi, *Persophilia*, 141–47; Abbas Kiarostami, *The Wind Will Carry Us [Bād Mā Rā Khāhad Bord]*, Behzad Dorani (1999).

well into the second half of the nineteenth century in Lucknow, independent from the proliferation of the FitzGeraldian *Ruba'iyat*.³³

In a time that saw, as the mid-twentieth century Khayyam-scholar Arthur Arberry observed, Europe “[adopting] a somewhat colonial attitude to Oriental writing”, FitzGerald was entirely ignorant of Persia and sacrificed “Moslemic theology and mysticism” in the *Ruba'iyat* for the creation of a modern poem. A corpus of folkloristic medieval poetry had been transformed and now, in the words of Gittleman, “spoke to a generation of modern problems, conflicts, doubts and perplexities.”³⁴ Despite these distortions, shortcomings, and imprecisions FitzGerald is generally recognised for his artistic rendering, which portrays the spirit of the *Ruba'iyat*, and for its contribution to the popularisation of the Persian language and Persian culture in the English-speaking world – which due to its popularity in turn re-focussed attention on Khayyam and the *Ruba'iyat* in Iran and the larger Persianate world.³⁵ In a blink of Foucauldian heterotopia, W.G. Sebald found FitzGerald's English verses to

...radiate with a pure, seemingly unselfconscious beauty, feign an anonymity that disdains even the last claim to authorship, and draw us, word by word, to an invisible point where the medieval orient and the fading occident can come together in a way never allowed them by the calamitous course of history. *For in and out, above, about, below/ 'Tis nothing but a Magic Shadow-Show,/ Play'd in a Box whose Candle is the Sun,/ Round which the Phantom Figures come and go.*³⁶

5 Khayyam and the *Ruba'iyat* in Scholarship

At a lecture in St. Petersburg in 1895, the Russian Orientalist Valentin Zhukovskii explained that he had found quatrains in Omar Khayyam's *Ruba'iyat* that could also be found in the œuvres of other Persian poets – he called these poems “wandering quatrains”. Since then the authenticity of the poems that became

33 Juan Cole, “The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam and Muslim Secularism,” *Studies in People's History* 3, no. 2 (2016): 138–50.

34 Gittleman, “FitzGerald's Rubaiyat and Germany,” 13; Arberry, *Omar Khayyám*, 22–25.

35 Gittleman, “FitzGerald's Rubaiyat and Germany,” 11; Arberry, *Omar Khayyám*, 22–23; Juan Cole, “Did Medieval Muslims Invent Modern Secularism? The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam Was Embraced by Many Western Intellectuals as an Aid to Their Own Secularization,” *The Nation*, 7 November; François de Blois, *Poetry of the Pre-Mongol Period*, 5, Persian Literature. A Bio-Bibliographical Survey (Routledge, 2006), 34–35.

36 W.G. Sebald, *The Rings of Saturn*, trans. Michael Hulse (New York: New Directions, 1995), 200–201.

known as the *Ruba'iyat* of Omar Khayyam have been in discussion.³⁷ Popularised in academic circles between 1895 and the early 1900s by Zhukovskii, the British Orientalists Edward Denison Ross and Edward Granville Browne, Arthur Christensen and Friedrich Rosen, there are in simplified terms and historically flattened (there has not been much decisive development) two sides to the debate: one argues that the historic Omar Khayyam was not a poet and the quatrains were only attributed to him after his death. Not a single quatrain can be safely said to have been authored by Khayyam, although he likely wrote some Arabic poetry and five quatrains, later called Khayyami, have been dated back to his life time. The first larger collections of Khayyami quatrains are found no less than two hundred years after his death. In-between had been the Mongol invasions, a time of great tumult, suffering and upheaval, explaining the focus on the impermanence of life in the *Ruba'iyat*.³⁸ The Ilkhanate Mongols (thirteenth to fourteenth century) also had a penchant for feasting, pointing to the origin of the frequent mention of wine and terrestrial pleasures.

As de Blois explains, “in light of the general stereotyped view in the Islamic world of the philosopher as the enemy of religion and morals ‘Umar could very conveniently have been built up into an atheistic bogey.” Rather than risking one’s own neck, or uttering a frustrated quatrain anonymously to diminished publicity, Khayyam was likely used as a cover name under which grievances of various sorts could be aired in an ascribed tradition of the philosopher. So much so that by the Mongol period Omar Khayyam was, in the words of de Blois, “no longer a historical person but a genre” developing a life of its own in later centuries amid the tides of political, social, economic and intellectual currents of the dynasties following the Mongols.³⁹ Representatives of this line of argumentation are most notably Helmut von Ritter, Hans Heinrich Schaeder, Francois de Blois and recently Juan Cole.⁴⁰

The other side, notably represented by ‘Ali Dashti, Mohammad Foroughi, Arthur Arberry, Mehdi Aminrazvi and to a lesser degree by Swami Govinda Tirtha, Christensen, Christian Herrnholt Rempis and Rosen, concedes that certainly not

37 Valentin Zhukovskii, “Omar Chajjam i’stranstvujuščija četverostišija [in Russian],” in *Al-Muza’fariya (Festschrift for Victor Rosen)* (St. Petersburg, 1897); Abdullaeva, “Zhukovskii.”

38 Hans Heinrich Schaeder, “Der geschichtliche und der mythische Omar Chajjam,” *ZDMG* 88 (1934): 26.

39 de Blois, *Poetry of the Pre-Mongol Period*, 305; Cole, “Rubaiyat Muslim Secularism.”

40 Schaeder, “Der geschichtliche und der mythische Omar Chajjam.”

all of the over 1,400 quatrains originated with the philosopher himself.⁴¹ They focus on finding new ancient manuscripts of Khayyam and a close reading of the oldest known manuscripts. To this side, Khayyami quatrains appear as possibly passed down by students of Khayyam and only put into writing a few generations after the philosopher's death.⁴² This also explains the divergence of content in the oldest manuscripts, as each student transmitted a different corpus. This side agrees that the number of quatrains only began to grow in later centuries to over a thousand, but sees the newer quatrains as written in the tradition of the original quatrains, which go back to the astronomer-philosopher. The spirit of Khayyam is thus found in the quatrains, and seen as paralleled in part in the philosophical treatise of Khayyam, with his emphasis on theodicy, fate and scholarship. The non-connection side disputes this line of reading, and argues that there is no congruence in Khayyam's scholarly philosophy and in the philosophy of the quatrains. The side that sees a connection *Khayyam-Ruba'iyat* has had to struggle with being duped by forgeries and in some instances stood accused by the other side of lacking an adequately critical approach.

Another question in debate is whether Khayyam's quatrains were Sufi in character or not, often decisively influenced by the selection of quatrains drawn on as evidence. On this question Khayyam's philosophical treatise have had to answer as well, either confirming or disproving the question. Modernists, who thought Sufism degenerative, found Khayyam to be a rationalist only. Others, among them Sufi representatives, argued that Khayyam was not anti-Sufi. FitzGerald translated the *Ruba'iyat* as non-Sufi, whereas Nicolas read a spiritual dimension in the quatrains together with his philosophical works. Rempis followed Nicolas, whereas Rempis' doctoral supervisor Schaefer saw no Sufi-spirituality in the *Ruba'iyat*, dating the genesis of the quatrains to a period in which Sufi Islam was weak in Iran. But Ritter thought that sceptical and even blasphemous verses could co-exist. Ross also perceived of Omar as rather un-Islamic, but Sufi still. Edward Heron-Allen called his work *The Sufistic Quatrains of Omar Khayyam*. Syed Omar Ali-Shah went so far as to forge a manuscript to support the argument that Khayyam was Sufi.⁴³

⁴¹ Ali Dashti, *In Search of Omar Khayyam*, trans. L.P. Elwell-Sutton (London: Routledge, 2011); Swāmi Govinda Tīrtha, *The Nectar of Grace. Omar Khayyam's Life and Works* (Allahabad: Kitabistan, 1941).

⁴² Christian H. Rempis, *Die Vierzeiler 'Omar Chajjāms*, 15.

⁴³ Schaefer, "Der geschichtliche und der mythische Omar Chajjam," 28; Christian H. Rempis, *Die Vierzeiler 'Omar Chajjāms*, 18; Wohlleben, Chajjam, corrected manuscript, 16; E. Denison Ross, "Some Side-Lights upon Edward FitzGerald's Poem, 'the Ruba'iyat of Omar Khayyam.' Being the Substance of a Lecture Delivered at the Grosvenor Crescent Club and Women's Insti-

These debates, which started with a few Orientalists in the meticulous philological tradition of needing to know what is truly authentic and what is not, spiralled out of academia and can be found in recurring discussions between literature, religion, philosophy and the contemporary descendants of “Oriental Studies” around the world. To popularise scholarship and upgrade the mass product intellectually for a bourgeois audience, FitzGeraldian and other translations and interpretations often come with an introduction to the *Ruba'iyat* and the life, times and philosophy of Omar Khayyam. These drew particularly in the first half of the twentieth century on recent academic findings of manuscripts and scholarly interpretations, thus underpinning the popular discourse academically. Literary reproductions, such as Maalouf’s *Samarcande* or Mathias Énard’s recent *Boussole*, similarly integrated this scholarly study of the *Ruba'iyat* and Persian history into their narratives of Khayyam as stylistic elements.⁴⁴ Equally, a fair bit of literary quality is found when reading some of the academic studies on Khayyam.

On the occasion of the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of FitzGerald’s *Ruba'iyat* in 2009, festivities and academic conventions were held in Cambridge and Leiden. The doubt in the authorship of the historic Omar Khayyam of the Khayyami *Ruba'iyat* has solidified, but the academic community, now increasingly international, is still divided and discusses a wide range of questions concerning Khayyam and the *Ruba'iyat*. Coumans recently published a bibliography of the *Ruba'iyat* and other Khayyam publications from around the world, runs four extremely content-rich Omar Khayyam-*Ruba'iyat* websites and is setting up a database to chronicle Khayyam’s global reception. In 1971 ‘Ali Dashti counted over 2,000 books written about Khayyam. More recently Coumans found over 1,500 scholarly works in North America and Europe alone, 200 musical pieces set to Omar Khayyam, at least five films (the latest in 2005), and translations into 67 languages by 421 translators.⁴⁵ These productions are linked, as Coumans describes, “...to various religions, philosophies and individual beliefs. There are Sufi-oriented translations, humanist editions, spiritual, mystical and psychological interpretations. Anyone can use the text as [s/he] pleases and we have reached the point where the *rubaiyat* have entered the private domain, where

tute,” lecture, Grosvenor Crescent Club (London, 1898); Robert Amot and Edward Heron-Allen, eds., *The Sufistic Quatrains of Omar Khayyam*, trans. Edward Fitzgerald, Edward Henry Whinfield, and J. B. Nicolas (New York: M. Walter Dunner, 1903); Syed Omar Ali-Shah, *The Authentic Rubaiyyat of Omar Khayyam. A New Translation with Critical Commentaries*, 3 (Berlin: Peacock, 2008).

⁴⁴ Mathias Énard, *Boussole* (Arles: Actes Sud, 2015).

⁴⁵ Coumans, *Rubaiyat Bibliography*, 13, 21–46; Coumans, “Database,” 245–52.

the individual feels free to become an Omar Khayyam... Closely linked to this is the commercial domain, where you can find all sorts of artefacts, paraphernalia and useless products.” In parallel, the “idolatrous worship of Omar that was witnessed in the first decades of the previous century has changed into a more deliberate, critical approach.”⁴⁶ The story of the *Ruba'iyat* and Omar Khayyam continues to reverberate in the academic community, with more recent works focussing on material histories of Omar gadgets, the *Ruba'iyat* in global reception, or the rebellious poet-philosopher read as a figure of resistance against the “powers of darkness”. Discussing the elites in the Omar Khayyam clubs of the 1890s, Kaiserlian concludes that the poetry of the *Ruba'iyat* can be “infinitely transformed to suit one’s desires.”⁴⁷

6 Rosen’s Tentmaker of Poetic Iranian Philosophy

Friedrich Rosen and his 1909 *Die Sinnsprüche Omars des Zeltmachers* are as much illustrative of the adaptability of the *Ruba'iyat* to serve the desires of the author, as they shall serve here to shed a light on how Rosen’s time spent in the German diplomatic service in Iran and subsequent career in the German foreign service influenced the production of “this modest bouquet of blossoms of the scent of the garden, in which I lingered for so long”, which he intended “to bring back home to gain some new friends in the lands of the German tongue for the great thinker Omar Khayyam.” What were Rosen’s *Ruba'iyat*, with which he aimed at a “faithful rendition” from the Persian?⁴⁸ Who is Rosen’s Khayyam, the maker of philosophical tents, whose “philosophical depth... constitutes the main appeal of [his] verses”?⁴⁹ In order to understand the form and contents in Rosen’s *Sinnsprüche*, these “verdeutschte” (germanised) *Ruba'iyat* need to be situated in the context of their genesis. Rosen’s encounters with Khayyam and the *Ruba'iyat* in Iran and British circles were constitutive, but also triggers related to German diplomacy, Orientalist academia and personal life in the 1900s. The structural limitations of the acquisition and translation of knowledge

⁴⁶ Coumans, *Rubáiyât Bibliography*, 16–22.

⁴⁷ Kaiserlian, “Elites of the Omar Khayyám Club,” 172.

⁴⁸ Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 15.

⁴⁹ The “legend” Rosen relays is that Omar’s father was a tentmaker. In self-irony Omar took el-Khayyami, meaning tentmaker, as a penname: a tentmaker who sewed “tents of philosophy”. Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 14, 96; Wilhelm Litten, *Was bedeutet Chäjjam? Warum hat Omar Chäjjam, der Verfasser der berühmten persischen Vierzeiler, gerade diesen Dichternamen gewählt?* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1930), 7.

that this analysis raises, are complemented by the systemic restraints imposed on the author Rosen, whose diplomatic vocation and career ambition give rise to the questions: Why publish? Why poetry? Why Khayyam?

In a short note preceding his translations of the quatrains Rosen explains the poetic form of Khayyam's *Ruba'iyat* in five simple sentences with the key definition that "the ruba'i expresses in epigrammatic shortness a unique thought, in a way that the fourth line brings with the returning rhyme the final chord, often with an unexpected twist." In the 93 quatrains that Rosen presented in his initial 1909 publication, Wohlleben's characterisation of the typical Khayyami *Ruba'iyat* form (aaba) is followed with some flexibility. Some of the quatrains are almost slavishly imitating the original style, such as:

Die Großen, die die Ämter all gepachtet
Und vor Begier nach Geld und Ehr' verschmachtet,
Die sehen den kaum als 'nen Menschen an,
Der nicht, wie sie, nach Geld und Titeln trachtet.⁵⁰

The big ones, who have leased all the positions, and
Amid their desire for money and honour sweltered,
They hardly regard as human,
Who does not strive for money and titles.

Others are less pointedly refined in translation, less thematically rich or more repetitive:

Kaaba und Götzenhaus bedeuten Knechtung,
Der Christen Glocken, hört, sie läuten Knechtung.
Kirche und heil'ge Schnur und Rosenkranz und Kreuz
Wahrlich, sie alle nur bedeuten Knechtung.⁵¹

Ka'ba and idol house mean subjugation,
The bells of the Christians, hear, they ring subjugation.
Church and holy cord and rosary and cross
Truly, they all mean subjugation.

The thrice repetition of a word, here "Knechtung" بندگی (alternatively translatable as piety or devotion), to signify the end rhyme, is reflective of the Persian original.⁵²

⁵⁰ Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 53.

⁵¹ Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 63.

⁵² Friedrich Rosen to Ignaz Goldziher, August 1908, GIL/36/06/04, OC – MTA.

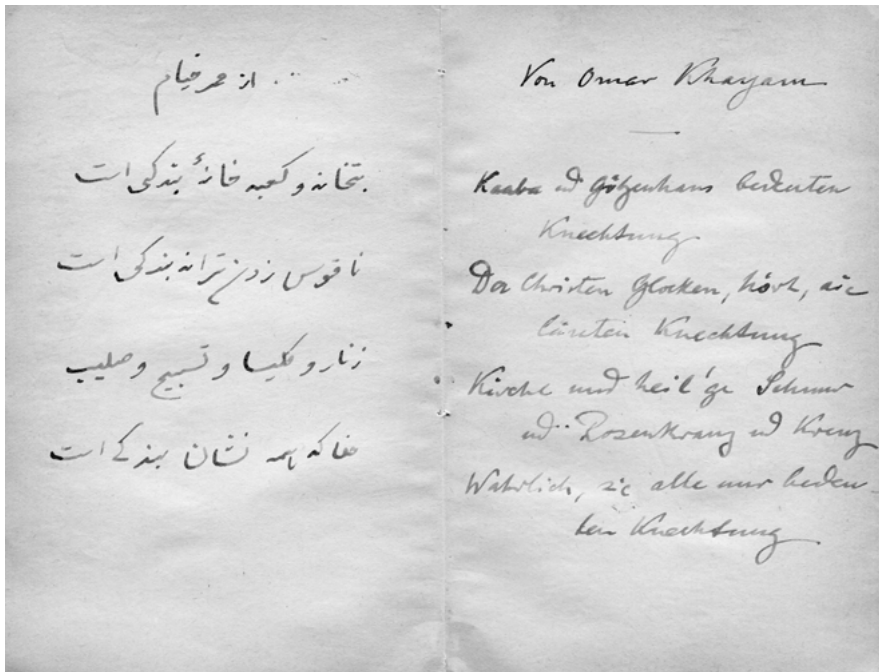


Fig. 6.1. From Friedrich Rosen's poetry notebook.

However, Rosen does not always follow the original pattern in the German translation. A Persian ruba'i ending in lines 1, 2 and 4 on *ku*, sounding like the coo of the pigeon, meaning in English "where" and in German "wo", is translated as:

War einst ein Schloß, das bis zum Himmel ragte,
Vor dessen Mauern Königsstolz verzagte,
Auf dessen Trümmern klagt jetzt des Täubchens Ruf,
Der klingt, als ob's nur wo, wo? wo, wo? fragte.⁵³

Was once a castle, that reached into the skies,
Whose walls let the pride of kings despair,
On its rubble now wails the call of the dove,
It sounds, as if it only asked where, where? where, where?

Rosen tells his reader that the original usually is in aaba rhyme, but notes that aaaa rhymes are also common, finding reflection in his own translations:

⁵³ Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 29.

Ein Vogel saß einst auf dem Wall von Tûs,
 Vor ihm der Schädel Königs Keikawûs
 Und klagte immerfort: "Afssûs, afssûs!
 Wo bleibt der Glocken und der Pauken Gruß?"⁵⁴

"A bird once sat on the wall of Tus [city in Khorasan],
 In front of it the skull of king Keikawus [6th century],
 And complained evermore: Afsuss, afsuss [regret]!
 Where is the bells' and the drums' salute?"

In most instances Rosen is careful to keep a consistent meter in each quatrain. In the preceding quatrains this is at either ten or eleven syllables. Other quatrains follow a meter of eight, nine or twelve syllables. In rare cases Rosen breaks the meter to accommodate content. In the quatrain which had three ک at the end of the lines originally, his German version counts four "wo?" in one line to preserve a ten syllable meter. The form that Rosen gives single quatrains is thus by and large representative of the original structure, but since the *Sinnsprüche* often do not precisely replicate the number of syllables found in the source *Ruba'iyat* also the original meter cannot be maintained. Whenever Rosen cannot find a translation that captures both content and form, he chooses to keep the one he deems more important. Content tends to trump form. As such the *Sinnsprüche* approach the original *Ruba'iyat* in style and expressiveness, to the extent that Wohlleben, a scholar of Iranian literature and linguistics, used in his *Omar Chajjam, das Rubai und die Deutsche Literatur* Rosen's translations of the quatrain as the standard along which to explain the original: "The pattern is well represented here, despite Rosen's somewhat sober expression."⁵⁵

Despite his awareness of the proliferation of the *Ruba'iyat* in German primarily in Rosen's version, Wohlleben analyses every German language author, who has translated Khayyam or written a ruba'i, from Hammer-Purgstall to Bodenstein, de Lagarde and Nordmeyer and those who may have been influenced by the *Ruba'iyat*, but this one sentence is curiously Wohlleben's only analysis of Rosen's translation. Gittleman, who offers a sociological reading of literature history and less textual analysis, looks at the *Reception of Edward FitzGerald's Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam in England and Germany* and with a cursory reading of the *Sinnsprüche* concludes that "there can be no question that Rosen relied exclusively on the Persian for his translation, but the spirit and form can be traced to FitzGerald."⁵⁶ Gittleman is correct in reading Rosen's *Sinnsprüche* as closer in

⁵⁴ Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 29.

⁵⁵ Wohlleben, Chajjam, corrected manuscript, 12.

⁵⁶ Gittleman, "FitzGerald's Rubaiyat and Germany," 179.

style to the poetic FitzGerald than to the prosaic Nicolas translation, as Rosen followed FitzGerald in recreating the aaba rhyme. But the supposition that Rosen's rhyme form is an imitation of FitzGerald rather than from original *Ruba'iyat* is unsubstantiated. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but as some of the above quatrains show, Wohlleben's description of Rosen's translation as "sober" is not entirely off the mark for some of the *Sinnsprüche*. Other Rosen quatrains reverberate in their simplicity:

Als ich noch in der goldnen Jugend stand,
 Schien mir des Daseins Rätsel fast bekannt.
 Doch jetzt, am Schluß des Lebens, seh' ich wohl,
 Daß ich von allem nicht ein Wort verstand.⁵⁷

When I still stood in golden youth,
 Existence's riddle seemed almost known to me,
 But now, at the end of life, I see,
 That I have not understood a word of it.

In the note on the form of the *Ruba'iyat at the outset of the Sinnsprüche* Rosen emphasises:

"Each Rubā'ī is an *independent poem*. The ostensible coherence in this here following array does not correspond to the Persian original, in which the Rubā'ijāt are sorted following an alphabetical system without regard for the meaning."⁵⁸

Gittleman says that Rosen follows FitzGerald's cue when ordering the quatrains thematically into "transience" (Vergänglichkeit) "mystery of the world" (Welträt-sel) "wine and love" (Wein und Liebe) "teachings/apprenticeship" (Lehre) and "final words" (Schlussworte).⁵⁹ This is not entirely convincing, as FitzGerald produced one long in itself conclusive poem with single quatrains strung along a narrative that contain these themes. In Rosen's *Sinnsprüche* there is no narrative.

In any case Rosen's categories of transience contain 27, world riddle 18, teachings 28, wine and love 18, and final words 2 quatrains. As with the original *Ruba'iyat* the thematic contents of these poems can overlap and contain more than one meaning:

Des Lebens Karawane zieht mit Macht
 Dahin, und jeder Tag, den du verbracht

⁵⁷ Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 39.

⁵⁸ Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 19.

⁵⁹ Gittleman, "FitzGerald's Rubaiyat and Germany," 176.

Ohne Genuß, ist ewiger Verlust.
Schenk ein, Saki! Es schwindet schon die Nacht.⁶⁰

Life's caravan with might moves
On, and every day that you have passed
Without pleasure, is eternal loss.
Pour another one, bar tender! The night already fades away.

This very first quatrain opens the section on transience, but could with its last two lines and particularly the exclamation "Schenk ein, Saki!" be as much about wine and its allegory wisdom and seeking for knowledge and truth. In applying the above elaborated categories of thematic contents of the Khayyami *Ruba'iyat* to the *Sinnsprüche* with a modest consideration for allegorical speech, the following quantitative break-up is produced: 1) the impermanence of life figures 27 times, though not exclusively in Rosen's section on transience (18 times); 2) the quest for the meaning of life can be read in 11 poems; 3) the question of how a supposedly good God has created evil in the world is touched upon 17 times; 4) fate and free will, often expressed as Fortuna's "Weltenrad" (wheel of the world), is considered in 19 quatrains; 5) the here and now and wine and love are thematised 44 times (18 times in Rosen's "wine and love"); 6) learning, knowledge and wisdom and their limits are contemplated in 28 quatrains (7 times only in Rosen's section on "teachings"); 7) God, questions of belief and religion are pondered in 36 quatrains; and 8) the afterlife is topic 23 times.

The eight themes thus show up together 205 times in Rosen's 93 *Sinnsprüche*, attesting to the double and triple contents of single quatrains. This goes some of the way in explaining some of the discrepancies between Rosen's categories and the categories here proposed. Further explanation can be found in the title of Rosen's *Ruba'iyat: Sinnsprüche* which are epigrams, meant to deliver meaning. Thus, in "teachings" we find poems that in the categories above fall primarily into 3) evil 4) fate and 7) God, such as:

Als Gott einst meinen Brei zurechtgegossen,
Ist Gut' und Böses mit hineingeflossen.
Drum kann ich wahrlich auch nicht besser sein,
Als er mich selbst einst in die Form gegossen.⁶¹

When God once cast my pulp together,
Good and evil flowed into me.
Thus, I can truly not be better,
Than he himself cast me once into form.

⁶⁰ Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 23.

⁶¹ Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 51.

For Rosen this is a teaching expressed in epigrammatic form. Similarly, other quatrains can be sorted into one meaning or another, and at the end of the day, literary discussions could certainly then say that the moral to be learned should be in another category. What should, however, be clear, is that Rosen's *Sinnsprüche* reflect what are generally regarded as the contents of the Khayyami *Ruba'iyat*.

The most prevalent categories are 5) the here and now, often symbolised by wine, love and pleasure, although love can also at times be read spiritually and wine for wisdom, and 7) God and questions of faith and religion, often rather critical of God or religion. This prevalence can be read as circumstantial or accidental, but some of these verses speak directly to the arguable contradiction of these two themes, such as:

Ich trinke nicht aus bloßer Lust am Zechen,
Noch um des Korans Lehre zu durchbrechen,
Nur um des Nichtsseins kurze Illusion!
Das ist der Grund, aus dem die Weisen zechen.⁶²

"I don't drink out of mere lust for boozing,
Nor to break the teachings of the Quran,
Only for nonbeing's short illusion!
That is the reason why the wise booze."

Rather than cultivating the supposed contradiction of belief in God, pleasure and knowledge, the quatrain Rosen selected here defuses the tension by explaining that it is not the Epicurean pleasure of carousing, nor an intended heresy, but that the goal of drinking is the illusion of not-being, a transcendental state, that is mirrored in the Sufi practice of seeking fana, a state of spiritual self-annihilation and unity with God. This Rosen qualified as the practice of the wise—spiritual retreat of those knowing of the inadequacies of life. It is particularly in this regard of allowing for a religious spirituality that Rosen diverges drastically from FitzGerald, whose *Ruba'iyat* are materialist and atheist, and is closer to Nicolas, who sees in Khayyam "a mystic poet, a philosopher at once sceptic and fatalist, a Sufi in one word like most Oriental poets."⁶³

Wisdom is then also not necessarily equated with knowledge and studying. In several quatrains knowledge is belittled as eventually futile amid the certainty of death, the inequities of life and oppression by the power-holders of politics and religion:

⁶² Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 70.

⁶³ Jean-Baptiste Nicolas, *Quatrains de Khayam*, 3–4.

Die einen streiten viel um Glauben und Bekenntnis,
 Die andern grübeln tief nach Wissen und Erkenntnis;
 So wird es gehn, bis einst der Ruf sie schreckt:
 Es fehlt so euch wie euch zur Wahrheit das Verständnis.⁶⁴

Some quarrel much about belief and creed,
 Others brood deeply after knowledge and enlightenment;
 Thus it will continue, until one day the call daunts them:
 You and you lack the understanding for truth.

In other poems the reader finds orthodox religion and religious knowledge condemned. Some quatrains Rosen chooses are rather blasphemous:

Solche Verbote, wo es ausgeschlossen,
 Daß man sie einhält, sind denn das nicht Possen?
 Ist das nicht so, als riefst Du: "Umgedreht
 Den vollen Becher, doch nichts ausgegossen?"⁶⁵

Those prohibitions, that are impossible
 To observe, are those not a farce?
 Is that not, as if you called: "Upside down
 The full glass, but nothing spilled?"

And while this may certainly be interpreted as contrary to some strict interpretations of Islam, the majority of the poems that Rosen selects do not propose an anti-Islamic sentiment, as they are couched in a language of all religions being equally wrong, regardless if Islam, Christianity or Judaism, when they become too strict and its official representatives oppressive:

In Kirchen und Moscheen und Synagogen
 Wird man um seiner Seele Ruh' betrogen.
 Doch dem, der der Natur Geheimnis ahnt,
 Wird keine Angst vorm Jenseits vorgelogen.⁶⁶

In churches and mosques and synagogues
 You are cheated of your peace of mind.
 But to him, who senses nature's secret,
 No lies of fearing the afterlife are told.

Rosen is not shy to build in anachronisms, when he has Khayyam advise a sanctimonious hypocrite, who scolds him for his crooked path, to buy glasses so that

⁶⁴ Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 46.

⁶⁵ Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 55.

⁶⁶ Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 62.

he can see his path is straight. Rosen also includes a number of original terms in Persian, as the above noted “Saki” (bartender) “Afssûs” (expression of regret), and figures of the Quran (Joseph) and Persia (Keiwakuss, Jamshid, Cyrus). In the book Rosen explains these terms, the anachronism, uncommon historical figures or religious episodes in endnotes following the translated quatrains. After all, even though Rosen wrote for a popular audience, he saw his readers as critical and seeking knowledge, who would want to learn more about Khayyam, his life, times and worldview. In this Rosen is similar to FitzGerald, who though at times inaccurately stylising his poems with exotic words presupposes an educated reader interested in the foreign. To this end of educating an interested readership, Rosen provides evidence, argument and background to several dozen of the quatrains.⁶⁷ The *Ruba'iyat* were to be accessible for the uninitiated, while their foreignness were not to be levelled.

Before pointing at the very end of the booklet to further notable scholarship on Khayyam, Rosen concludes the quatrains themselves with describing the time of Omar Khayyam and facts known about his life, followed by an essay on the philosopher's “Weltanschauung”. This sketch, arising out of his lecture in Copenhagen in 1908, is another seventy pages long. The arguments Rosen presented are clearly attributable to scholarly sources or original manuscripts. A number of key elements in Rosen's Khayyam reading distinguish the *Sinnsprüche* from other *Ruba'iyat* interpretations at the time. Perhaps most importantly and in contrast to FitzGerald and many *Ruba'iyat* editions, Rosen's Omar Khayyam and his *Sinnsprüche* were not primarily Epicurean, cynical or escapist and intended for assuaging a tortured soul. Rather, Rosen situated his selection of *Ruba'iyat* in a reading of several layers of Iranian medieval history, in which the author Omar Khayyam lived and for whom Rosen found nothing but praise. While his discussion was intended as a guide to the *Sinnsprüche*, Rosen's thick explanation also serves to lay before his readership a part of Persia that he felt attached to and found presentable for a German audience. Through Khayyam Rosen presented his personal view on Persia, which was like Christensen's description, also meant to be a representation of the “Volkscharakter” (folk character) of the Persian people.⁶⁸ Rosen locates Omar Khayyam in the time of the “highest blossoming of Islamic culture” which he characterises as a “first renaissance... that provided fertile soil for nearly all of the intellectual life of the middle ages .. until the great second renaissance brought forth the powerful progress in all areas of

⁶⁷ Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 149–52.

⁶⁸ Martin Hartmann, “Christensen, Arthur. Omar Khajjâms Rubâijât,” *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 17 (1903): 366; Christensen, *Khajjâms Rubâijât*.

knowledge and art, the blessings of which still gratify humanity today". For Rosen the Persians were the main source of this revival that recovered elements of Greek culture: "Despite the rigidity of Muslim orthodoxy, Persian scholars ventured – even if in Arabic language and form – to give significance to the teachings of Plato, Aristotle, Euclid, Hippocrate, Galeus, Pythagoran and above all new-Platonism. It was *Aryan spirit in a Semitic vest*. The scholars drew on movements, which in part had their origins in Islam itself".⁶⁹

Rosen's characterisation of the period was contradictory. Is the Aryan the Greek and thus the knowledge that has travelled? Or is the Aryan the Persian and thus only the receptacle in form of the spirit? If the Aryan spirit is the Greek knowledge, and the Semitic vest Islamic but itself in part originator – if an "external" originator – then the Persian would not be the receptacle, but rather a fusion, or layering of Aryan and Semitic. In itself the Persian would be nothing. In invoking the image of the vest, Rosen enfolded Rodinson's characterisation of the anti-clerical opinionators in the vein of Voltaire:

[They] worshipped Hellenism, as a civilization founded on the freedom of the spirit, the worship of reason and beauty, and inspired by the same Aryan spirit as the Vedas, the source of European greatness. In opposition to this, they envisioned a Semitic spirit of intolerance, scholastic dogmatism, fanatical and blind reliance on faith alone, a debilitating fatalism... Attributed to this spirit were all the misdeeds associated with Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.⁷⁰

Rosen notes that Khayyam lived at the time after the Mu'tazilites (eighth to tenth century), who were grappling with notions of predestination and free will. It was seen as incompatible with divine benevolence that man should be punished for the mistakes, that without any of his fault had been "written on his head by the dame deity". Answers to questions on determinism and free will were sought in neo-Platonic works, first among the Qadarites (seventh century) and Mu'tazilites, and then, Rosen maintains, especially among Sufis. Here the Aryan-Semitic duality loses pertinence as Rosen relates the Sufis to Indian and Central Asian Buddhist asceticism, and explains their belief in the oneness of God, "tawhid", as a spiritual dimension that was also pondered philosophically.⁷¹ Rosen describes a religious reaction to Greek and sceptic ideas among Sufis, after the orthodoxy had assimilated Greek dialectics, at the time of al-Ghazali. Rosen contrasts al-

⁶⁹ Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnssprüche*, 84–85.

⁷⁰ Maxime Rodinson, *Europe and the Mystique of Islam*, trans. Roger Veinus (London: I.B. Tauris, 2006), 67.

⁷¹ Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnssprüche*, 86–89.

Ghazali, whom he sees as only assimilating the method of Greek thought but not the freedom of its contemplation, to previous scholars such as Avicenna and the Ikwhan as-Safa in Basra (the brothers of sincerity, a secret society of philosophers in the eighth or tenth century), who searched for an accommodation of Greek philosophy and Islamic belief.⁷²

Rosen noted the doubt over the authorship of the *Ruba'iyat* by Khayyam, but attaches little significance to the matter and thinks it possible that some of Khayyam's quatrains were meant to attack these orthodox tendencies of al-Ghazali and others.⁷³ But unlike Rodinson's observation that interconnections of "Volksgeist" were entirely language based, Rosen complicated Khayyam and the *Ruba'iyat* by then enumerating a series of other influences at work in Iran or brought in through trade and migration,⁷⁴ namely Nestorian Christians (fifth century and after), Zoroastrianism, Sunnis, Shi'ites, Isma'ilis, Jews, Manichaeans, Buddhism and Hinduism:

All these manifold and varied – contradictory and intertwined among themselves – intellectual currents (Geistesströmungen) of this great century need to be kept in mind, when trying to picture this wonderful man, who knew them and in his short sentences bespoke them all. Yet, who stood much above them as he stood above his time.⁷⁵

Based on the research of his day Rosen's biography of Khayyam was historically accurate. On the point of the question of Khayyam's belief Rosen followed Christensen, who noted that the philosopher went on the hajj to demonstrate his piety. Rosen wondered, "or was he really becoming pious? The soul of the Persian is so polymorphic."⁷⁶ To support this speculation, Rosen proposed a reading of a text by the contemporary of Khayyam, Nizami 'Aruzi, who witnessed Khayyam's death in Nishapur after having completed his study of Avicenna's "God and the world". According to 'Aruzi Khayyam prayed, "O lord, truly, I have tried to know you, as much as it was in my powers. Thus forgive me. My knowledge of you may be my intercessor with you." To Rosen this disproves the notion of those who have claimed that Khayyam was "a disastrous philosopher, an atheist and a materialist." He should rather be seen as someone grappling with God and understanding the world.

⁷² Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 90–91.

⁷³ Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 109.

⁷⁴ Rodinson, *Europe and the Mystique of Islam*, 61.

⁷⁵ Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 92–95.

⁷⁶ Christensen, *Omar Khajjâms Rubâiât*, 44; Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 106.

In describing Omar Khayyam's "Weltanschauung", Rosen echoes modern Iranian nationalist positions in postulating:

In the great, the only and eternal culture clash, which man has always fought, the fight between the *seekers* and those, who *believe to have found*, he embodies the direction restlessly striving for knowledge (Erkenntnis). Omar Khayyam is the Aryan, who does not want to go under in the dogma and the tradition of Arabianess so prevalent in his country at the time. 400 years of Islam's rule had not sufficed to eradicate the Indo-German spirit of Persian-ness.⁷⁷

What Rosen only hints at in describing the times of Khayyam is here more pronounced, even if the contradictions of Rosen's thought persist. In one sentence he equates Arabs and Islam, but then a page later writes that "Arabic culture is nothing else than the continuing life of Greek scholarship under the into Islam dissolved Arabianess and Persians and their thought." Of Turkish influences during the period of the Seljuks there is no mention.⁷⁸

The role of wine is central to Rosen's reading of the *Ruba'iyat*. Far from lending the grape an Epicurean or physically intoxicating dimension, it symbolises to Rosen first and foremost "independent thinking", something he saw in connection to Sufism and the at the time still common practice of pre-Islamic Zoroastrians. Similar notions of Zoroastrian continuity, the practice of magi and wine-drinking are prevalent in Christensen's thought and Goldziher had in a lecture on "Islamisme et Parsisme" at the Congress of the History of Religions in Paris in 1900 argued that the Prophet Mohammad had been influenced by Zoroastrianism.⁷⁹ Rosen does not provide much evidence or elaborate further on Zoroastrian belief systems, nor does this unsubstantiated assertion of "Aryan independent thinking" explain the Greek and Indian influences, or the Islamic and Arabic influences on the Persian spirit found in Khayyam.

Rosen's main thesis boils down to Khayyam not having belonged to any school. To him Khayyam was not "purely materialist-atheist, nor following the traditional-church direction" and while levelling his main criticism against dogma and orthodoxy, he saw no religion than Islam as any better. Rosen allows for a Sufi dimension, but rejects Nicolas' and Friedrich von Bodenstedt's assertions that Khayyam was first and foremost a spiritual Sufi poet. Rather Rosen

⁷⁷ Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 107–8.

⁷⁸ Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 109.

⁷⁹ Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 117; Hedemand Søltøft, *Christensen*, 45; P. Oktor Skjærvø, "Goldziher and Iranian Elements in Islam," in *Goldziher Memorial Conference. June 21–22, 2000, Budapest. Oriental Collection. Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences*, Éva Apor and István Ormos (Budapest: MTA, 2005), 245–49.

sees the *Ruba'iyat* in light of Ketman, “between pretense and art of disguise”, while pursuing philosophy in the sense of searching for the meaning of existence. To illustrate this Rosen notes that when he translated a word in his *Sinnsprüche* as “subjugation”, its meaning could also be “piety” or “devotion”, which would then be religiously acceptable. This reflected foremost Rosen’s own belief that dogmatic religion was oppressive and disallowing of a more open approach to faith.⁸⁰ Coming back to the notions of philosophy and critical thought, Rosen perceives in Khayyam the “Aryan striving for independent thinking and free searching for truth, in opposition to the rigid dogmatic walls, erected by Arabianism”, which Rosen reads in parallel to the only constant in Khayyam’s thought being the notion of “unity of existence” (*wahdat al-wujud*).⁸¹ If we were now to pin Rosen’s Khayyam to three words, the philosopher-poet would have to be a “complex Sufi Aryan”. But as Rosen made an effort to show the multifaceted character of Khayyam and contradicts himself in the process so consequently this does him injustice.

Rosen made an effort to situate the *Ruba'iyat* in the context of Omar Khayyam’s life, his other writings and his time. However, without allowing for the possibility of the quatrains having been written by various authors over the duration of centuries and thus under the influence of various spatial and temporal influences, it was this very analysis that made Rosen grapple with a time-flattened reading of the *Ruba'iyat*, looking for and finding explanations that are in a few cases unlikely and taken together incoherent. As such he portrayed the same time-flattening and search of the Persian folk spirit that Hartmann and Christensen put on display in arguing that the Sassanian Iranian spirit did not perish after Iran’s Islamisation but “daß Chaijams Geist der persischen Geist selber ist, wie er im Mittelalter war und in allem Wesentlichen noch heutzutage ist”.⁸²

Rosen does not push the “Sufi Aryan”, nor does he define what that Aryan is supposed to be beyond the spirit of free-thinking and knowledge-seeking, but rather ascertains that the historical material at the reader’s and his disposal is not sufficient to adequately define Khayyam and the *Ruba'iyat*. Like Immanuel Kant, Rosen noted, Khayyam did not write down everything he thought, making

⁸⁰ Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 113–16.

⁸¹ Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 118, 129.

⁸² “That Khayyam’s spirit is the Persian spirit itself, as it was in the Middle Ages and is by and large still today.” Christensen, *Khajjāms Rubāijāt*, 103; Martin Hartmann, “Christensen – Rubāijāt,” 370.

him impossible to grasp fully. Rosen concludes with his own belief that Khayyam stood above theories, and his contradictions gave rise to his thought and writing: “Ich möchte gerade darin, daß Omar alle die verschlungenen Pfade des Denkens andeutet und sich doch in keiner Sackgasse verrennt, als das für ihn Charakteristische bezeichnen. Nicht orthodox, nicht irreligiös-materialistisch, nicht durchweg sufisch-mystisch ist seine Weltanschauung.”⁸³

Together with his “consummate form” this puts Khayyam among the “greatest and best that have reached immortality in the memory of terrestrials”.⁸⁴ This praise and returning comparisons with the grandees of European and German thought, taken together with Rosen’s admittance that he does not propose to finally define Khayyam and the *Ruba’iyat*, but rather present them as long meandering account of the colourful, contrastful and intriguing Persian past, eventually point to Rosen’s opening remark at the outset – “to gain some new friends in the lands of the German tongue for the great thinker Omar Khayyam”.⁸⁵

7 Confluences of Scholarship and Politics in Poetic Translation

Similar to other translations and interpretations of Omar Khayyam, Rosen’s *Ruba’iyat* were a product of disposition, circumstance, chance and intent. Resulting from specific encounters, triggers, influences and restrictions, the *Sinnsprüche* are traceable to Rosens’s diplomatic career, scholarly interactions and private life. Omar Khayyam only appeared in Rosen’s public life by the summer of 1908, when he announced to the International Orientalist Congress in Copenhagen that he would speak about Omar Khayyam’s “Weltanschauung”.⁸⁶ His *Sprachführer* from 1890 and the reworked English *Colloquial Grammar* from 1898 made no reference to Omar Khayyam or Persian poetry. The main sources of Persian study with his father Georg Rosen had been Sa’di’s *Gulistan*, Rumi, Hafez and the *Elementa Persica*.⁸⁷ Rosen encountered Khayyam in India and probably on his way back via Iran in 1886–7, but the *Ruba’iyat* did not leave a

83 “That Omar hints at all the entwined paths of thinking but does not come to a deadlock, I would describe as what characterises him. Not orthodox, not irreligious-materialist, not thoroughly Sufi-mystic is his worldview.” Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 146.

84 Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 147.

85 Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 15.

86 Christian Sarauw to Friedrich Rosen, 4 August 1908, ASWPC.

87 Friedrich Rosen, 1926, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte I*, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 31.

strong, immediate impression on him.⁸⁸ After the Persian self-study books for beginners, Rosen's second Iranian study interest was the history of Islamic Iran. This focus prevailed in Baghdad, where the reading of history was the best remedy for Rosen's boredom. Yet, along the years in Iran and Iraq Rosen read Khayyam with his teacher Sheikh Hassan and there were instances where he would cite a Khayyami ruba'i in a letter to his brother Hareth or pen down a few verses in his notebooks.⁸⁹ The idea of publishing a German translation of the Persian *Ruba'iyat* only came into Rosen's focus through the interplay of his private dabbling in Persian poetry in Tehran and the increasing popularity of Omar in the Anglophone world at the turn of the century.

By the late nineteenth century the FitzGerald-Khayyam frenzy reached British circles in India and Iran. Through mingling with the Persian poetry enthusiasts Dufferin in Shimla in 1886/7 and Bell in Tehran in 1892 Rosen became aware of the popularity of Khayyam in the English-speaking world through the peripheries of the British Empire. When Rosen was preparing his *Colloquial Grammar* publication in London in 1897, Edward Denison Ross, who helped Rosen with the publication, was in parallel translating Valentin Zhukovskii's essay on the wandering quatrains. Ross was holding talks about Khayyam as a scholar in London at the same time and the ground-breaking findings made for a good topic of conversation for the two friends on the sidelines of a rather sober language guide production.⁹⁰ Friends in Germany, to whom Rosen had shown translations of his Persian poems, encouraged him to publish the poems by the Persian sage. Another motivation was that Khayyam enjoyed worldwide success in English, while he was virtually unknown in Germany still.⁹¹ Overshadowed by Goethe's "twin in spirit" Hafez, and the ghazel rhyme form popularised by Hammer-Purgstall and Rückert, the German translations of the *Ruba'iyat* were either re-translations from the FitzGerald or the Nicolas translations without consultation of Persian language *Ruba'iyat*, or they were like those of Friedrich Bodenstedt not in line with the original rhyme forms.⁹²

⁸⁸ Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, *Rubáiyât of Omar Khayyam*.

⁸⁹ Gertrude Bell, *Persian Pictures*, 95–104; Friedrich Rosen, 1898, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte II*, 7 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 150; Friedrich Rosen, *Persische Gedichte*, 1890s, notebook, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen, رباعیات عمر خیام, ASWPC.

⁹⁰ Abdullaeva, "Zhukovskii"; Friedrich Rosen, *Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar*, VIII; E. Denison Ross, "Side-Lights upon Edward FitzGerald's Poem".

⁹¹ Remy, "India and Persia on the Poetry of Germany," 76, 82; Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 12–15; Gittleman, "FitzGerald's Rubaiyat and Germany," 165.

⁹² Friedrich Bodenstedt, *Die Lieder und Sprüche des Omar Chajjam* (Breslau: Schletter'sche Buchhandlung, 1881); Ambrose George Potter, *A Bibliography of the Rubáiyât of Omar Khayyam. Together with Kindred Matter in Prose and Verse Pertaining Thereto* (London: Ingpen and Grant,

According to Rosen's memories it was on a hunting trip in Azerbaijan that he decided he would translate Omar Khayyam to German. Night fell and he came across the ruins of a caravanserai, in which a group of men from the Shahsevern tribe had made camp, the eldest reading from a manuscript of Firdowsi's *Shahnameh* to the men huddled around a fire. Speaking with the men, Rosen learned that the caravanserai stemmed from the days of Khayyam's protector Sultan Malik-Shah. Khayyam himself could have stayed there, Rosen thought, sparking the desire to translate the *Ruba'iyat* to German.⁹³ This pretty story is possible, even if one would think that this may have rather sparked a translation of the *Shahnameh*, which was written not much earlier in the early eleventh century. In any case, this undated event would not have been the first encounter with Khayyam.

Already when staying at the court of the Indian viceroy in 1886–7, Rosen had studied Persian poetry with his employer and family friend Lord Dufferin. Dufferin studied Persian to use the language for viceregal business and to enjoy its poetry in his leisure hours.⁹⁴ By the time Rosen left Shimla in the spring of 1887, Dufferin self-published a transliteration of 110 Khayyami *Ruba'iyat* in an edition of twenty copies. Had the "Persian story-teller in India" to whom Rosen and Dufferin had listened in the evening hours recited Khayyam? On request of the two Persian students with their interest sparked by FitzGerald, as a simple example of Persian poetry, or because listening to a few lines of Khayyam for digestion had also been practice at the Mughal courts, which the British replaced? Dufferin's *Ruba'iyat* provides no further detail.⁹⁵ Another British connection of Rosen to the *Ruba'iyat* was Gertrude Bell. Bell, who had come to Tehran in 1892, studied Khayyami *Ruba'iyat* with Sheikh Hassan, who was also a teacher of Rosen. Like Dufferin in Shimla, Bell was tied into an English social world in which the FitzGeraldian popularisation of Khayyam was dominant.

The global demand of the *Ruba'iyat* also began to raise the profile of Khayyam as a secular or Sufi poet in Iran, where he had before shone more as

1929), 142; Wohlleben, Chajjam, corrected manuscript, 28–39; Remy, "India and Persia on the Poetry of Germany," 66.

⁹³ Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 166–67.

⁹⁴ Frederick Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood to Friedrich Rosen, 7 October 1887, F130–26, BL EM – Dufferin Collection; Friedrich Rosen, *Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar*, VII; Potter, *Bibliography of the Rubaiyat*, 104.

⁹⁵ Friedrich Rosen, *Modern Persian Colloquial Grammar*, VII; John R. Perry, "Language Planning in Iran and Tajikistan," 155; Cole, "Rubaiyat and Muslim Secularism."

a mathematical genius.⁹⁶ Rosen's poetry notebooks and loose papers from the 1890s show that he was without much categorical structure gathering and translating poems that his eye fell on, or that were supplied to him by his Iranian friends. There was Khayyam, Sa'di, Hafez, Rumi and unattributed poems and folk songs.⁹⁷ This was not a work of scholarship aimed at publication. In his own words: "My Persian studies, however, always remained a secondary occupation. I resorted to them only in my leisure hours."⁹⁸ It was a way for Rosen to practice and improve his Persian skills, to immerse himself into the high culture of the country in which he resided, a hobby that he shared with British and Iranian friends.

Translating select poems to German also allowed to show a snapshot of literary Iran to friends and family in Europe. Rosen had known the Persian language since his youth. But this had been a dry Persian, a language studied in a chamber of the parental home in provincial Detmold, as alive as the Latin of Horace or the Greek of Homer. As German dragoman in Iran Persian came alive as a language of friendship, suffering, struggle, faith, knowledge and love. As he practiced the language in everyday life his vocabulary expanded and he gained a more acute understanding of nuances of meaning of single words and expressions. Everyday Iranian life was naturally that of the German diplomat in Tehran during the tumultuous 1890s of Qajar Iran. This context of the diplomatic role of Rosen and the socio-political events in Iran framed Rosen's view of Iran, its history, its culture, its everyday life.

Even though Rosen's translation of the Khayyami *Ruba'iyat* was primarily a hobby, it was one that arose out of the necessity of learning Persian. Knowing and practicing the poetic qualities of the language was beneficial for the forming and cultivation of social bonds with a number of highly placed officials and nobles at the Qajar court. Standing at the outset of Rosen's translation of the *Ruba'iyat* were the romantic Persophile FitzGerald escaping prude England, pastime poetry reading at the British viceregal court in India, the religious lower class Persian teacher Sheikh Hassan in Tehran, and a chance encounter with a Turkic tribe in the steppes of northern Iran.

The text sources Rosen used for his *Sinnsprüche* were not uniform either. The quatrains in his notebooks, that may have originated from Sheikh Hassan, his friend Zahir ed-Dowleh, other non-written sources, letters or short excerpts of Persian poetry manuscripts were complemented by an extensively marked

⁹⁶ Friedrich Rosen, "Bell, Persian Pictures"; Gertrude Bell, *Persian Pictures*, 97–101; Cole, "Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam and Muslim Secularism," 148.

⁹⁷ Friedrich Rosen, *Persische Gedichte*, 1890s, notebook, ASWPC.

⁹⁸ Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 169.

up version of E.H. Whinfield's bi-lingual English-Persian *Ruba'iyat* in his collection. Rosen's scribble in the book corrected Whinfield's Persian spelling and English translations and added his own translations of verses in the margins. In pencil Rosen slated single quatrains for "new translation" to German: "نو ترجمه". In a letter to Hartmann, Christensen noted that he had found many of Rosen's *Sinnsprüche* in Whinfield's publication.⁹⁹ Nicolas' bi-lingual collection was another source of the *Sinnsprüche*, leading Andreas to inquire whether Rosen had not simply taken all Persian *Ruba'iyat* from that collection. Rosen denied the charge: "Many of them I have found in Oriental editions, that are nowhere listed in European works."¹⁰⁰ One of these manuscripts was a rather expensively decorated in blue-gold patterns, which served for the illustration of the third edition of the *Sinnsprüche*, a limited edition deluxe of 300 copies. Its ornamentation was taken from a "manuscript in possession of the translator."¹⁰¹

Rosen consulted Nicolas, FitzGerald, Whinfield and others to compare his interpretations and poetic form. Rosen knew FitzGerald's poem, and recognised its aaba rhyme form, but had Rosen imitated FitzGerald rather than the original? It is more likely that FitzGerald's success with the introduction of this new rhyme form in English encouraged Rosen to try the same in German. It was then also not an unmitigated immediacy of the source in form of a physical manuscript that Rosen could point to as added value of his *Sinnsprüche*. Rather, it was the immediate translation of a specimen of poetry from Persian, by someone who was familiar with the language, people, culture and history of Iran and the Persianate world that Rosen took pride in. Thus, characteristically for the historical development of the *Ruba'iyat*, Rosen's *Sinnsprüche* are a melange of new, copy and original, with lines of transmission not always clear, but where visible, pointing all over.

Particularly for his retrospective discussion of some of the *Ruba'iyat* as speaking to Sufi concepts of unity (tawhid) and wujud (existence), Rosen's induction in the Safi 'Ali Shah circle and encounters with derwishes was formative. Sufism had for Rosen become a way to cope with life in Iran, but also a social space that was not removed from the world, but rather part of the highest eche-

99 E.H. Whinfield, *The Quatrains of Omar Khayyam* (London: Trübner & Co, 1883), 23; Arthur Christensen to Martin Hartmann, 10 July 1909, copy, I 1 Utilg. 578, KB – HA.

100 Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 20 October 1912, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG.

101 This manuscript was likely among the twelve coloured Persian manuscripts that perished when the Rosen house in Berlin was bombed out in 1945. Friedrich Rosen, *Rubaiyat-i-Omar-i-Khajjam. Die Sinnsprüche Omars des Zeltmachers*, 3 (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1914); Nina Rosen, Haus Bingerstr. 28, Berlin-Wilmersdorf. Liste der verbrannten Gegenstände. Anlage zum Antrag auf Entschädigung nach der Kriegsschäden V.O, 1945, ASWPC.

lons of Iranian society and a place of reading, studying, discussion, refined manners, friendship and verses. The Sufi order that framed Rosen's reading of Persian poetry, rooted in its Ni'matullahi past between Iran and India, struggled with western hegemony in philosophy, religion and the arts and was under its guide Safi 'Ali Shah itself a product of an Indo-Iranian modernity. The religious tolerance hallmarked by Zahir ed-Dowleh opened a forum, albeit hidden in the libraries or studies of only a few men of independent means, in which exchange could take place and where poetry was read together. While this background allowed Rosen to identify certain aspects in the *Ruba'iyat* that were reflective of Sufi practices and beliefs, this also had him dismiss notions of limiting Khayyam to being a Sufi. Only wishful reading, he thought, let some of the *Ruba'iyat* appear as neatly bringing together knowledge and faith, the factual and the spiritual worlds. In a letter to Oskar Mann he distanced himself from Nicolas' purely Sufi interpretation – “alles sufisch!” (everything Sufistic) – which had found much traction in other European translations.¹⁰²

Another angle traceable to 1890s Iran in Rosen's *Sinnsprüche* is the Khayyam who has faith and struggles with God, but is dismissive of orthodox religion, hypocritical clergy, legalistic prescriptions and everything that clashed with fact and science-based modernity. Already in little Suleiman's Jerusalem years, religion was the violence of the Christian churches at the Holy Sepulchre and the “weltfremd” and needlessly authoritarian clergyman from Mecklenburg, who had been charged with his education. In Tehran Rosen's aversion to the clergy was in parts rooted in the Sufi orders in Qajar era Iran standing in continuous conflict with the Shi'ite 'ulema.¹⁰³ Further aggravating was the outbreak of the cholera, that Rosen saw spread and intensify due to the population not being educated in health and hygiene due to the clergy's control of education. As Tehran and most of Iran shut down, one third of the inhabitants of his village Dezashub died. Rosen saw religious fatalism at fault.¹⁰⁴ The reports that Rosen sent to Berlin also often narrated conflicts in a triangle of Europeans, Shah's court and Shi'ite clergy, but Rosen's critique was not so much categorically anti-religious, as it was specific. In his reading Russian infiltration and stifling of development was as much at fault for the demise of late Qajar Iran as the Shah's oppression, the princes' corruption and the clergy's recalcitrance. In Rosen's mind the *Ruba'iyat* and Khayyam spoke to these afflictions of Iran.

102 Friedrich Rosen to Oskar Mann, 16 May 1909, 10, 1888 Darmstaedter 2b, StaBiB.

103 Bayat, “Anti-Sufism.”

104 Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 171–72.

1890s Iran, caught between extravagant Qajar court rule, failing public finances, foreign encroachment, the beginnings of western education and large-scale infrastructure projects, and often unclear political allegiances and shifting coalitions became for Rosen a society in which the practice of Ketman was central for artistic and philosophical expression – and for survival. This practice of religiously permissible dissimulation “in cases of constraint and when there is a possibility of harm” was an element in much of Persian religious poetry and Rosen found it in the *Ruba’iyat*. In his lectures during the 1900s Goldziher described a destructive influence of al-Ghazali’s attacks on the peripatetic traditions of Avicenna on the “free spirits” of Sufi Islam. Goldziher excused al-Ghazali as someone fighting against nihilist tendencies in a bid to renew and reform Islam, integrating Sufi and legal notions into an “inner experience” of religion. Having read Goldziher, Rosen placed Khayyam into a period of growing orthodox dominance amid al-Ghazali and his followers, when the philosopher lost the patronage of Malik Shah and Nizam al-Mulk. Rosen saw Khayyam adapting his quatrains to the insecure circumstances and hiding criticism and frustration behind allegory.¹⁰⁵ As Cole outlines, it is more plausible that this dissimulation of criticism in the *Ruba’iyat* stems from the aftermath of the Mongol invasions several hundred years after the life of Khayyam, and then later from the crackdown on liberties in the Safavid dynasty, and in the context of Khayyam’s popularity at the Mughal courts in India.¹⁰⁶ Ketman was also dominant in Christensen’s analysis, and was informed by the generalising and essentialist description of Ármín Vámbéry: “Ketman (the art of dissimulation allowed by Islam) is a gift well known and diligently cultivated by Orientals”.¹⁰⁷ Speaking to the lack of engagement with Shi’a Islam, neither Rosen nor any of these Orientalists placed Ketman in the context of its genesis in the history of Islam, as a defensive tool for the followers of the Twelve Imams to evade persecution. For Rosen, under the impression of the daily court struggles in 1890s Tehran, the technique was something typical for the Iranian nation.¹⁰⁸

“Diplomacy is a complex art that involves the mixing of political acumen, cultural finesse, language abilities and conversation skills to wield the power

105 R. Strothmann and Moktar Djebli, “Taḳīyya,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, P. Bearman, et al. (2012). R. and Bausani Blachère, A., “Ghazal,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, P. Bearman, et al.; Ignaz Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter’s Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1910), 172–79; Georg Rosen and Friedrich Rosen, *Mesnevi*, 19.

106 Cole, “Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam and Muslim Secularism.”

107 Hedemand Søltoft, *Christensen*, 48; Arminius Vambery, *The Life and Adventures of Arminius Vambery* (Delhi: Asian Education Services, 1998), 282.

108 Strothmann and Djebli, “Taḳīyya.”

of persuasion", as the diplomat-poet Kumar notes. "Generally conducted in short sentences which reveal as much as much they hide" for Rosen poetic dissimulation worked well in the trade of diplomacy.¹⁰⁹ By the time of his publication of the *Sinnsprüche* in 1909 Rosen's struggles as a diplomat representing the German Kaiserreich in Morocco elucidated for him on a personal level the limits of the sayable. Presenting a number of *Sinnsprüche* critical of political elites and their disregard of common people and facts, Rosen's selection also lends itself as hidden critique of the Kaiserreich of Wilhelm II and its noble power-holders that branded the bourgeois Rosen with his contrarian views as tactless and careerist.

In his socio-literary comparison of the appeal of the *Ruba'iyat* in England and Germany, Gittleman argued that only downtrodden Weimar Republic Germany with its "Kulturpessimismus" became as receptive to Khayyam's notions of impermanence and transience as decadent fin de siècle Victorian England had been. During imperial times, Gittleman argued, the *Ruba'iyat* were in Germany "psychologically and intellectually inaccessible" amid a belief in national greatness, expansionism, adulation of the Kyffhäuser myth and Wagnerian opera.¹¹⁰ Gittleman was right in that the popularity of Khayyam in Germany was largest during the Weimar Republic. The initial year of publication of Rosen's *Sinnsprüche* was however 1909, and the publication was met with immediate wide appeal. In the third edition before the war the publishing house noted in 1914 that "the deep and idiosyncratic proverbial wisdom of Omar Khayyam has quickly gained currency (eingebürgert) in our literature".¹¹¹ This was not a period of withering, ennui and downfall, but saw a growing, rambunctious, strong, megalomaniac pre-war Germany, even as there were warning signs of imperial overstretch. In a retroactive heroic interpretation Rosen's inclusion of a large number of transience themed quatrains as a warning against what was to come would figure well. However, apart from the Khayyami *Ruba'iyat* in the original simply holding quite a number of quatrains that are dealing with the definiteness of life, Rosen's emphasis made him neither furnace of national society nor augur of its demise.

The appeal of the transient quatrains for Rosen rather stemmed from his personal "wandering" life, the diplomat arriving in a city to depart several months or years later, leaving behind a house that had become home, friends, an entire world filled with routines, memorable events and moments of happiness and

109 Abhay Kumar, "Two Shades of Passion," *Kathmandu Post*, 4 November 2012.

110 Gittleman, "FitzGerald's Rubaiyat and Germany," 156, 132.

111 Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*, 38.

sadness, and cultures in all their wonders and horrors. “Is the life of the diplomat a constant leave-taking”, Rosen wrote in his memoirs.¹¹² Impermanent was also what he saw in cities and societies he knew. Rosen witnessed the disruptive qualities modernisation brought to culture and tradition in India in the mid-1880s. Once proud Iran was but a shadow of its former self in the midst of Russia’s and Great Britain’s Great Game, and the Constitutional Revolution (1905 – 1911) brought about further social and political upheavals. Old ways were disappearing in the Jerusalem which had in his youth been his Biblical classroom, riding on the side of his father and in caravans down to the Dead Sea. The new German consulate was located in the rapidly expanding western Jerusalem, outside the Seljuk era city walls. Railways and mass tourism à la Baedeker and Thomas Cook were replacing the donkeys and the jinns of his childhood. And as he saw the erstwhile centre of Islamic learning Fez decompose, then in the summer of 1907 his son Oscar died in an accident aged twelve. On Oscar’s tombstone in Berlin’s Apostel graveyard was engraved a couplet:

حیف در چشم زدن صحبت تار آخر شد
روی گل سیر ندیدیم و بهار آخر شد

Alack – this conversation became in the blink of an eye the last.

I had not seen his blossoming’s countenance enough and yet it was the last spring.¹¹³

Sitting there in Morocco in a political position he sought to escape, pursuing a politics he thought futile and his son dead, translating these Khayyami poems of impermanence, love, wisdom and beauty, was diversion and solace. Or as Rosen told Wilhelm II, when receiving him in a train wagon on the Belgian-Dutch border in November 1918, “also for Your Majesty solemn work will be balsam.”¹¹⁴

As already noted, the academic Orientalist discourse in Europe played a significant role in shaping Rosen’s *Sinnsprüche*. This discourse was pertinent mostly in the essay on Omar Khayyam’s life, times and Weltanschauung. Rosen had been aware in Iran of the influence of Greek philosophy on the Islamic golden age through the Beit al-Hikma under Harun al-Rashid and al-Ma’mun (ninth century). Sheikh Hassan studied Aristotle at madrasa in Tehran, ‘Emad ed-Dowleh’s work on Molla Sadra had him grapple with Aristotelian and neo-Platonic meta-

¹¹² Friedrich Rosen, *Aus einem diplomatischen Wanderleben. Bukarest. Lissabon* (Berlin: Transmare, 1932), 24.

¹¹³ Family Photographs, ASWPC; Dickens, *Mumsey’s Recollections*, 51; Nina Rosen to F. C. Andreas and Lou Andreas-Salomé, Autumn 1907, 362 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG.

¹¹⁴ Friedrich Rosen, *Ende des Kaiserreichs. Weimarer Republik*, 221.

physics and it is safe to assume that Rosen's other close intellectual sparring partner Zahir ed-Dowleh was no stranger to such ideas and concepts either.¹¹⁵ Text-immanent indication of this Greek dimension was the connection of Khayyam's biography with Ibn Sina (Avicenna), who drew on neo-Platonic and Aristotelian thought. The most profound influence was, however, a much discussed lecture on the neo-Platonic and gnostic elements in the Hadith by Goldziher at Copenhagen's Orientalists Congress in 1908. Goldziher had talked just before Rosen began discussing Khayyam's worldview.¹¹⁶ Particularly the conception of "oneness" in neo-Platonic works appeared compatible to Rosen's Sufi "tawhid" interpretation of some of the *Ruba'iyat*, and the dialectical inquisitiveness of Aristotelian philosophy Rosen saw mirrored in the philosophical works of Khayyam. Still during the congress Goldziher took an interest in Rosen's translations and Rosen sent him several *Ruba'iyat* in Persian next to his German translation and Goldziher suggested that Rosen should read more about the history surrounding the life of Khayyam. In the following years Rosen showed himself indebted to Goldziher for his "Förderung und Belehrung".¹¹⁷

Missing from Rosen's translations of the *Ruba'iyat* themselves, the interpretation of Aryan superiority over Arabic Islam in the section on Khayyam's Weltanschauung equally may have originated in 1890s Tehran. Employed by the French legation in Tehran in the 1860s, Arthur de Gobineau introduced scholarly circles in Iran to critical rationalism in Descartes' *Discours de la méthode* and his ideas in *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines* on the pure Aryan race and its superior character being submerged and degenerating by mixing with other races also penetrated Iranian circles, as Mohammad Qazvini suggested in his commentary on "Gobinism" in Germany in 1934.¹¹⁸ Also via the Russian ruled Caucasus the anti-Arabism in the writings of Mirza Fath'ali Akhundzadeh (1812–1878) and Mirza Aqa Khan Kermani (1853–96) in Iran began to function like Europe's anti-semitism against Jews. They were devious, inhuman and had subverted and degenerated the pristine body and spirit of the Aryan nation. At fault for the demise of Iran, its backwardness, underdevelopment and corruption were the lizard eat-

115 Gertrude Bell, *Persian Pictures*, 100.

116 *Actes du Quinzième Congrès des orientalistes*, 67–69.

117 Friedrich Rosen to Ignaz Goldziher, 9 July 1909, GIL/36/06/03, OC – MTA; Friedrich Rosen to Ignaz Goldziher, August 1908, GIL/36/06/04, OC – MTA; Friedrich Rosen to Ignaz Goldziher, 21 November 1910, GIL/36/06/02, OC – MTA.

118 Seidel, *Kant in Iran*, 46–48; Motadel, "Iran and the Aryan," 123; de Gobineau, *L'inégalité des races humaines*; Aqa Mirza Mohammad Khan Qazwini, *A Biographical Sketch of Late Professor E. G. Browne. With Persian Text, English Translation & Notes by K. M. Maitra*. (Lahore: Behari Lal, 1934), 39–40.

ing Arabs who had benighted the Iranian nation with their religion Islam. Iran needed to cleanse itself of all foreign elements and return to its pre-Islamic enlightened Aryan culture.¹¹⁹

While these currents were gaining traction in Iran in the 1890s, Rosen's closest Iranian relations in Tehran were not known for entertaining such ideas. The Aryan angle in the *Sinnsprüche* was, thus, directly linked to scholarship Rosen came in contact with at the Orientalist Congress in Copenhagen. One of the discussants in the Islamic section was Edward Granville Browne, who in the second volume of his *Literary History of Persia* from 1906 discussed the "popular view, that Sufism is essentially an Aryan reaction against the cold formalism of a Semitic religion", which he found "tenable". Several pages later he revoked the notion as "a view which... cannot be maintained" as "two of the greatest mystics of Islām [al-'Arabi and Ibn al-Farid] were of non-Aryan origin." In his discussion of Khayyam, Browne did not bring up the Aryan angle.¹²⁰ Another discussant did though: Arthur Christensen. In his doctoral thesis on the *Ruba'iyat* in 1903 Christensen categorised the poetry and philosophy of Omar Khayyam as Aryan, which he connected in other writings to the legend of Rustam and Sohrab, the *Shahnameh* epic of Firdowsi, Zarathustra as a poet and the folk tales of the Iranian people.¹²¹ Christensen mirrored some of the conceptions of Ernest Renan and Theodor Nöldeke, who believed that Arabs had made no contribution to science, but that Islamic science was a product of Aryan Persians, who brought Greek philosophy into Islam.¹²²

Christensen and Rosen had discussed the *Ruba'iyat* and the latest scholarly developments in the field, ranging from the question of the wandering and authentic quatrains to the national character of the Iranian people.¹²³ Both students of Andreas, they agreed with their teacher that it was after millennia of migrations, trade, and wars no longer possible to describe the Iranians as an Aryan race – something that Andreas had prominently disputed in the case of Cyrus back in Hamburg in 1902.¹²⁴ However, these anti-Arab and anti-Islamic tenden-

119 Ali M. Ansari, *The Politics of Nationalism in Modern Iran* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 30; Reza Zia-Ebrahimi, "'Arab Invasion' and Decline, or the Import of European Racial Thought by Iranian Nationalists," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 37, no. 6 (2014): 1045–46; Zia-Ebrahimi, *Emergence of Iranian Nationalism*, 100–102, 155.

120 Edward Granville Browne, *A Literary History of Persia. From Firdawsī to Sa'dī* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), 246–59, 489–505; *Actes du quinzième Congrès des orientalistes*, 69.

121 Martin Hartmann, "Christensen – Rubâijât," 369; Hedemand Søltoft, *Christensen*, 96, 130.

122 Zia-Ebrahimi, "Arab Invasion," 1050–51; Zia-Ebrahimi, *Emergence of Iranian Nationalism*.

123 Arthur Christensen, *Brevkopibog* 1909, I 1 Utilg. 578, KB – HA.

124 Hedemand Søltoft, *Christensen*, 43.

cies tied to a supposed retardation of science and progress en vogue both in Orientalist studies and in Iranian nationalist circles found their way into Rosen's *Sinnsprüche* in the form of the "Geist". In his review of Christensen's dissertation Hartmann agreed that the *Ruba'iyat* expressed the Persian "Volksgeist" (spirit of the people), but unlike Rosen, who dreamt of the *Ruba'iyat* finding their place in a pan-human literary canon, Hartmann thought of the *Ruba'iyat* as a weapon:

Und hier haben wir es mit einem Volke zu tun, in welchem trotz der Blutmischung allzeit eine Potenz lebte, die hoch über der der benachbarten Semiten, freilich noch weit höher über der der andern Nachbarn, der Türken, steht, und dessen Einfluß auf ganz Asien nicht hoch genug eingeschätzt werden kann... Das Rubā'i ist ein nicht geringes Moment in dem Wege, den der persische Siegeslauf genommen hat, eine seiner schärfsten Waffen.¹²⁵

For Christensen and Rosen, in contrast, Khayyam represented a Persian spirit that was a treasure of humanity – in the words of Christensen:

[N]ämlich dass alle Fälschungen sich dem Khajjām'schen Geist so genau anschmiegen, dass wir eben den Beweis haben, wie treu die Rubāijāt von Omar Khajjām dem vielseitigen persischen Geist entsprechen... und [etwas] persisches und Gemeinmenschliches[sind]; [die Rubāijāt] sind, wie Sie in Ihrer Darstellung sagen, ein 'Beitrag zum Geisteschatz der Menschheit.'¹²⁶

The collaboration with Christensen also offers an insight into Rosen's historical flattening of Khayyam and the *Ruba'iyat*. Khayyam and the *Ruba'iyat* were animated by a Persian spirit that was – unlike race, which had deteriorated – continuous from the Middle Ages since when the Persian language had supposedly not evolved.¹²⁷ Without much evidence, Christensen postulated "that Khayyam's spirit is the Persian spirit itself, as it had been in the Middle Ages and as it is

125 "And here we are dealing with a people, in which, despite the blood mixing, always lived a potency, that stands highly elevated above the neighbouring Semites, and of course even higher above the other neighbours, the Turks, and whose influence on all of Asia cannot be judged highly enough... The ruba'i is a not minor moment in the path that the Persian course of victory has taken, one of its sharpest weapons." Martin Hartmann, "Christensen – Rubāijāt," 374.

126 "Namely, that all forgeries cling to the Khayyami spirit so accurately, that we have there the evidence how loyally the *Ruba'iyat* of Omar Khayyam reflect the versatile Persian spirit... something Persian and all-human; the *Ruba'iyat* are, as you say in your portrayal, a 'contribution to the intellectual treasure of mankind.'" Arthur Christensen to Friedrich Rosen, 1 July 1909, I 1 Utilg. 578, KB – HA.

127 Monika Gronke, *Geschichte Irans. Von der Islamisierung bis zur Gegenwart*, 2 (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2006), 31–37.

essentially still today". The origins of this spirit were in the pre-Islamic Sasanian Empire.¹²⁸

Christensen's continuous national spirit since time immemorial was for Rosen the original spirit, untouched by the destruction of European modernity. Just like Rosen had learned about Biblical Israel while living in 1860s Palestine and had ahistorically linked Bedouin hospitality to the New Testament, he had studied medieval Iran in 1890s Tehran and found a multifarious national history he saw reach from Omar Khayyam to his horseback journeys in the Iranian countryside. Rosen's analysis permeated the idea that he could transport the still real and original spirit of a place and a people, before the advent of European machinery would squash everything into one grey mass. Even as it was influenced by concocted ideas that were historically inaccurate and would later become seamlessly incorporated in all sorts of murderous bigotry, the Aryan-Persian spirit Rosen saw in Khayyam in 1909 was a language based spirit, an aspect of Persian high culture. Condensed in an appealing poetic form in German, there was a good chance a larger German readership would take heed, and learn something new about a place far away, often disparaged but supposedly connected through Indo-European language and a common ancestry.

For publishing anything Rosen needed the approval *Auswärtiges Amt*. A volume of poetry widely popular in other European countries was unsuspecting and if the German envoy in testy Morocco was associated with less compromising news than with the usual bickering this was also suitable. Chancellor Bülow granted Rosen's request for publication with "großen Genuß" (great pleasure) in early 1909 shortly before resigning his post.¹²⁹ Reading Rosen's *Sinnssprüche* several days after his resignation on the ship to his holiday home on the North Sea island Norderney, Bülow found solace in its poetry emphasising the transience of life and the irrelevance of political posts.¹³⁰ Some weeks later a journalist of the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* found on the desk of the "poet-prince-chancellor" Bülow:

ein Manuskript, in duftiges Saffianleder gebunden. Der Fürst ladet mich ein, es in näheren Augenschein zu nehmen. 'Es ist', sagt er, 'ein Geschenk unseres Gesandten in Marokko, Dr. Rosen, der vor wenigen Tagen bei uns hier gewesen, an meine Frau. Es sind Dichtungen. Die Rubaiat von Omar mit dem Beinamen Khajjam ... Dieser war einer der bedeutensten As-

¹²⁸ Christensen, *Khajjâms Rubâijât*, 103.

¹²⁹ Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 28 December 1908, 2072, Personalakten 12573, PA AA; Bernhard von Bülow to Friedrich Rosen, 6 January 1909, 2073, Personalakten 12573, PA AA.

¹³⁰ In his memoirs Bülow found Khayyam's "eternal wisdom" in the calm political thinking of Bismarck. von Bülow, *Weltkrieg und Zusammenbruch*, 8–9.

tronomen des Mittelalters und lebte im elften Jahrhundert in Tus in Ostpersien, und unser Dr. Rosen, der ein hervorragender Kenner des Orients und der orientalischen Sprachen ist, hat diese Dichtungen aus dem Persischen übersetzt.' Ich blättere in der Handschrift. Diese Dichtungen handeln von der Vergänglichkeit, den Welträtseeln, der Lehre und dem Wein und der Liebe. Diese östliche Weisheit hat etwas tief Ergreifendes. Die feinste Lebenskunst und die tiefste Skepsis spricht aus diesen Versen. Omar, der Zeltmacher, singt einmal:

Von allen, die auf Erden ich gekannt,
Ich nur zwei Arten Menschen glücklich fand:
Den, der der Welt Geheimnis tief erforscht,
Und den, der nicht ein Wort davon verstand.¹³¹

This was a pretty good advertisement, as the poet shone in the light of the prince and the German Empire shone in the light of Eastern wisdom. In another review the liberal *Leipziger Tageblatt* lauded Rosen's inclusion of the essay on Khayyam's time, life and worldview, serving "the creation of a bridge of understanding and removing every external inhibition on the way to 'the poet's land'".¹³² Rosen's claim to scholarly accuracy had Oskar Mann positively discuss the *Sinnsprüche* in literary magazines. Hartmann and Goldziher equally found the translation worthy, but Goldziher disagreed with Hartmann and found no reason why Khayyam should connect with a larger audience. Goldziher used Rosen's *Ruba'iyat* translation as an authoritative representation in his scholarly works and Andreas employed Rosen's German *Sinnsprüche* next to the Persian original as practice for his students in university seminars at Göttingen – mirroring the practice of Sheikh Hassan in Tehran.¹³³

131 "a manuscript, bound in scented Morocco leather. The prince invites me to inspect it more closely. "It is", he says, "a gift of our envoy in Morocco, Dr. Rosen, who was here a few days ago, to my wife. It's poetry. The *Ruba'iyat* of Omar with the surname Khayyam... He was an important astronomer of the Middle Ages and lived in the 11th century in Tus in Eastern Persia, and our Dr. Rosen, who is an extraordinary expert of the Orient and the Oriental languages, has translated these poems from Persian." I leaved through the manuscript. These poems deal with transience, the mystery of the world, scholarship and wine and love. This Eastern wisdom has something deeply gripping. The finest art of life and the deepest skepticism speaks out of these verses. Omar, the tentmaker, once sings: Of all that I have known on earth, I only knew two types of happy men: He, who had deeply delved into the secret of the world, and he, who did not understand a word of it." "Beim Reichskanzler in Norderney," *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* 994 (23 November 1908): 1–2; *Berlin und die Berliner. Leute. Dinge. Sitten. Winke.* (Karlsruhe: J. Bielefelds, 1905), 65.

132 "Die Sinnsprüche Omars des Zeltmachers," *Leipziger Tageblatt*, 30 May 1910.

133 Friedrich Rosen to Oskar Mann, 1 July 1912, 13, 1888 Darmstaedter 2b, StaBiB; Friedrich Rosen to Oskar Mann, 11 September 1912, 15, 1888 Darmstaedter 2b, StaBiB; L. Hanisch, *Goldziher und Hartmann*, 367; Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 20 October 1912, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Ignaz Goldziher, *Mohammed and Islam*, trans. Kate Chambers Seelye (New Haven:

Published with the reputable Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, the *Sinnsprüche* appeared “in three series at the cost of five, six, and ten marks. The last was a semi-delux leather-bound volume.” As the translation was promptly “received very favorably by critics”, the publishers asked Rosen to expand his selection for a new edition.¹³⁴ In the meantime posted as envoy to Bucharest, Rosen cultivated good relations with the Romanian King Karol and the versifying Queen Elisabeth, who was in Germany widely known under her literary pseudonym Carmen Sylva.¹³⁵ Sharing romantic ideals, the experience of a recently lost a child, which she tried to overcome through poetry, and the ambition to create understanding between her German culture and the Oriental culture she found in Romania, Elisabeth assisted Rosen with bringing some of the quatrains for the expanded new edition into melodious form.¹³⁶ The thematic break-up and interpretation of the *Sinnsprüche* remained the same, and although Rosen entertained relations with the Persian envoy in Bucharest, the source of the added Persian quatrains was more likely a European print edition or a manuscript in Rosen’s possession than a poetic encounter in the Romanian capital. In 1912 the editors introduced the now 152 quatrain strong *Sinnsprüche* as “perfectly structured” and in high demand. Just before the outbreak of the war, the composer Hans Hermann, known for his cheerful and vivacious compositions, set Rosen’s *Sinnsprüche* to music for piano and bass voice. A deluxe edition published in 1914 in the design of the renowned book artist Paul Haustein came at the astronomical price of 150 Marks, and by the end of the war the third edition was republished in an enlarged print.¹³⁷ Though in a newly tailored garb, Rosen’s *Sinnsprüche* had brought the Khayyami *Ruba’iyat* to German lands. When Andreas held seminar

Yale University Press, 1917), 184; Ignaz Goldziher, *Le dogme et la loi de l’Islam. Histoire du développement dogmatique et juridique de la religion musulmane*, trans. Félix Arin (Paris: Librairie Paul Geuthner, 1920), 277; Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 25 May 1909, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG.

134 Gittleman, “FitzGerald’s Rubaiyat and Germany,” 174, 180.

135 Karol of Romania to Friedrich Rosen, 2 January 1913, 1538, Personalakten 12569, PA AA; Elisabeth of Romania to Friedrich Rosen, 1 January 1914, 1538, Personalakten 12569, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, *Bukarest. Lissabon*, 29–34.

136 Zimmermann, *Dichtende Königin*, 3–38; Friedrich Rosen, *Die Sinnsprüche Omars des Zeltmachers. Rubaiyat-i-Omar-i-Khajjam*, 5 (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1922), 110; Friedrich Rosen, *Bukarest. Lissabon*, 30; Bunsen, *Welt in der ich lebte*, 218–30.

137 Ali Mohammad to Friedrich Rosen, 1911, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Gittleman, “FitzGerald’s Rubaiyat and Germany,” 177, 184; Hans Hermann, *Sinnsprüche des Omar Khajjam. Deutsch von Friedrich Rosen. Für eine tiefe Stimme mit Klavier komponiert* (Berlin: Albert Stahl, 1914); Friedrich Rosen, *Die Sinnsprüche Omars des Zeltmachers. Rubaiyat-i-Omar-i-Khajjam*, 4 (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1919).

in his Göttingen study¹³⁸ until dawn and had exhausted his and his students' capacity for grammar, sound and declination rules of the Iranian languages, he would read Rosen's *Sinnsprüche*, evoking in the words of his students "Oriental wisdom... serene intellectuality and a singular subtlety."¹³⁹

8 Interpreting Sufi Islam in Rumi's *Masnavi*

In the first half of the 1910s Rosen republished three books his father Georg had brought out in the mid-nineteenth century. Most closely related to German Oriental studies was a reworked version of his father's 1843 *Elementa Persica* that had been used as a Persian language textbook at the university of Leipzig. Reflecting the transition from Latin to German as language of scholarship and the Iranisation of Persian, as the language contracted from pan-Asian lingua franca, the new edition was Germanised and replaced "Indianisms" with text samples common in turn of the century Iran. His friends Hubert Jansen, Andreas, and the Iranian envoy to Germany, Hovhannes Khan, assisted Rosen in revamping his father's work.¹⁴⁰

Serving the commemoration of his father was the republication of *Tuti-Nameh. Das Papageienbuch*, a collection of moralising tales told by a parrot to an abandoned wife. Signed with the initials of his nom de plume Suleiman Wardi (S.W.), Rosen attached a lengthy biographical sketch of his father to this new edition, published with the literary publishing house Insel-Verlag. The original Sanskrit *Sukasaptati* (70 tales of the parrot) from twelfth century India, the fourteenth century Persian physician Ziya' ad-Din Nakhshabi translated in a selection of 52 stories as the *Tuti-Nameh* (book of the parrot). Nakhshabi's translation travelled across the Persianate world. In the seventeenth century Sari 'Abdullah Efendi translated 30 of these tales to Ottoman Turkish. Georg Rosen

138 Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche*.

139 Lou Andreas-Salomé, *Lebensrückblick. Eine Autobiographie*, Ernst Pfeiffer and Karl-Maria Guth (Berlin: Hofenberg, 2016), 137.

140 Georg Rosen, *Elementa Persica*; Hartmut Walravens, *Wilhelm Schott (1802–1889). Leben und Wirken des Orientalisten* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2001), 101; *Fleischer, Heinrich Leberecht. Historische Vorlesungsverzeichnisse der Universität Leipzig*, Universitätsbibliothek Leipzig (2008–12). http://histvv.uni-leipzig.de/dozenten/fleischer_hl.html; Rosen and Rosen, *Elementa Persica*, III–VI; Hubert Jansen to F. C. Andreas, 29 December 1914, 206 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Hubert Jansen to F. C. Andreas, 29 January 1915, 206 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Richard Hartmann, "Rosen, Georg: *Elementa Persica*," *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung* 2 (1920): 121.

came across Sari 'Abdullah's version when he was a dragoman in the Ottoman Empire and published his German translation in 1858.¹⁴¹

Similarly reflective of the role the lingua franca Persian played across Asia was the source text of the third Rosen republication, the *Masnavi* of Jalal ed-Din Muhammad Rumi. Born in Balkh in Khorasan (Afghanistan) in 1207, the theologian and teacher of Islam Rumi had migrated to the Arab world and eventually to Konya in the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum in central Anatolia, where he became a disciple of the mystic Shams-e Tabrizi. In the last two decades of his life he wrote a large corpus of spiritual poems in Persian: the *Masnavi*. After his death in 1273 his followers founded the Mewlewi Sufi order that practiced Rumi's spiritual teachings, and Rumi's poetic oeuvre proliferated across the Persianate world. In subsequent centuries Rumi's mystical poetry came to play a central role in cultural and social life and Sufi orders that drew on the teachings of Rumi became deeply embedded in "the interests and politics in the Ottoman state". Georg Rosen's translation of an excerpt of Rumi's *Masnavi* as the *Mesnevi oder Doppelverse des Scheich Mewlānā Dschelāl ed dīn Rūmī* sought to relay the mystical aspects of this culture. In his opinion the dominance of mysticism in Ottoman politics was characteristic of the "moral and physical atony" he had witnessed.¹⁴²

Unlike his father, Friedrich Rosen had encountered Rumi and Sufi Islam in a different time and place and the 1913 republication of his father's *Mesnevi* served a different purpose. Rosen followed a similar technique to the *Sinnsprüche* in presenting translated Persian poetry alongside an introduction to the contents of the poetry, the "Weltanschauung" of the author Rumi, and the historical context. Aside from memorialising his father, Rosen's goal was, "das uns vielfach so seltsam und befremdend anmutende Werk des großen orientalischen Mystikers einzureihen in das ununterbrochene Kettengewebe der menschlichen Geistesarbeit aller der Völker, welche von der Bildung des klassischen Altertums beherrscht waren."¹⁴³

141 Sari Abdallah Efendi, *Tuti-Nameh*.

142 Georg Rosen and Friedrich Rosen, *Mesnevi*; Reynold A. Nicholson, *The Mathnawī of Jalāl-ud-dīn Rūmī. Edited from the Oldest Manuscripts Available: With Critical Notes, Translation, & Commentary*. (London: Luzac, 1926), xiv; Refika Sariönder, "Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi and Hacı Bektaş Veli: Two Faces of Turkish Islam. Encounters, Orders, Politics," in *On Archaeology of Sainthood and Local Spirituality in Islam. Past and Present Crossroads of Events and Ideas*, Georg Stauth (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2004), 66; Schimmel, *Rumi. Diwan*, 5–11; Jawid Mojaddedi, "Rumi, Jalāl-al-Din IV. Rumi's Teachings," *Encyclopædia Iranica*, 8 September 2014. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/rumi-jalal-al-din-04-teachings>.

143 "to have the often for us so odd and strange seeming work of the great Oriental mystic join the ranks in the uninterrupted tapestry of chains of human intellectual labour of all peoples,

The interpretation of Rumi and the role of Sufi mysticism in the Islamic world in Rosen's introduction to the *Mesnevi* complemented and updated his deliberations on Omar Khayyam and the *Ruba'iyat* from a few years earlier. Similar to Rosen's Khayyam analysis was the identification of neo-Platonic and other Greek philosophical influences in the *Masnavi*:

Im Mineralreich fing die Menschheit an
Und ging zum Pflanzenreich über dann.
Dort lebte sie Äonen ungemessen
Und hat den Mineralzustand vergessen.
Als sie ins Tierreich dann den Weg gefunden,
Da war das Pflanzenreich ihr auch entschwunden,

...

Doch aus der Tierheit zog zu seiner Zeit
Der Schöpfer sie empor zur Menschlichkeit.
So stieg sie langsam auf von Art zu Art,
Bis sie vernunftbegabt und weise ward;
Vom Geisteszustand in den früh'ren Leben
Weiß sie sich keine Rechenschaft zu geben.

In the mineral kingdom began humanity
And then passed over into the plant kingdom.
There it lived for aeons unmeasured
And forgot the mineral state.
When it found its way into the animal kingdom,
Vanished from it was the plant kingdom

...

But from bestiality in his time pulled
The creator it up to humanity.
Thus it ascended from species to species,
Until it became endowed with reason and wise;
Of the intellectual state of former lives
It knows not to render account.

Rosen traced the developmental stages in this poem back to the development theory of Aristotle. In the same breath he suggested to the reader that the nineteenth century European natural scientists Ernst Haeckel and Charles Darwin were not so innovative with their development theories after all.¹⁴⁴ In Rosen's interpretation the Sufi connects this natural development with a last stage, the "return to the state of fana, of non-existence, that is the merging in the soul of the

which were governed by the education of classical antiquity." Georg Rosen and Friedrich Rosen, *Mesnevi*, 28.

¹⁴⁴ Georg Rosen and Friedrich Rosen, *Mesnevi*, 17–18.

world". Drawing on what Goldziher said in his lectures on Islam about Indian influences in Sufism, Rosen notes that this state of fana or annihilation is similar to Indian nirwana and the Buddhist stages of awareness, but differentiates fana as more positive in that it is a state that is reachable before death – an "eternal life in annihilation", a state of exhilaration. This self-annihilation leads into a state of non-existence, which Rosen traces back to Plato's contemplations on existence and non-existence.¹⁴⁵

There were two notable contrasts to Rosen's Khayyam interpretation. First, reference to anything Aryan was entirely absent. In the draft of the book Rosen had explained why:

Es ist besonders durch Goldziher schlagend nachgewiesen worden, dass unter dem ältesten Vortreten des Sufismus im Islam gewiss ebenso viele Araber wie Perser sich finden. Wir gewinnen dadurch den Eindruck, dass der Sufismus im Islam selbst, und nicht nothwendiger Weise in der arischen Volkszugehörigkeit der Perser seine Wurzeln hat.

In the draft Rosen followed this up with a description of how intensive the connections between Mesopotamia, Iran and India had been already before Islam. The continuous "Wechselwirkungen" of trade, culture and religion that touched upon all peoples led him to note that "el qulūb tataqārab – die Herzen borgen gegenseitig von einander" (hearts converge/approximate/borrow from one another).¹⁴⁶ For whatever reason, this section was not included in the actual publication. Secondly, in contrast to the *Ruba'iyat* Rosen read Rumi's *Masnavi* as a deeply Islamic text, intimately and primarily tied to the Quran and the prophet Muhammad. To Rosen this was no longer only the Arabic Quran of the seventh century, but one that had become finer, more allegorical and mystical, comparing Rumi's Quran conception to Philo of Alexandria's Old Testament interpretation in Greek, the Jewish Kabbalah and scholastic Christianity. Not dissimilar to Safi 'Ali Shah's Quran interpretation in Rumi-inspired *Masnavi* style, Rosen concluded that "Sufism rescues the Quran."¹⁴⁷ Another concept in the Sufism of Rumi that Rosen connected to Greek philosophy was that of tawhid or unity. But rather than going into detail as to this connection, it served him as a smokescreen to cite at length a ghazal from Rumi's *Divan* in which the narrator

¹⁴⁵ Georg Rosen and Friedrich Rosen, *Mesnevi*, 19; Goldziher, *Vorlesungen*, 161–65.

¹⁴⁶ "Especially by Goldziher it has strikingly been proven, that among the oldest appearance of Sufism in Islam certainly as many Arabs as Persians are found. We thus win the impression that Sufism is Islam itself and has not necessarily its roots in the Aryan ethnic affiliation." Friedrich Rosen, Entwurf zu *Mesnevi*, 1912, ASWPC, 123–125, 156.

¹⁴⁷ Georg Rosen and Friedrich Rosen, *Mesnevi*, 8.

sheds all forms of religion ("no Jew, no Christian, no Parsi, no Muslim"), origin ("not from Orient, Occident, land or sea...not from India, China, Turkestan, Iraq or Khorassan"), and form ("not of earth, air, fire or water... not from Adam and Eve and not from time or eternity"). As "no attribute shall be my attribute" and without "body or spirit" he belongs "only to His spirit". In this ghazal Rosen found the unity that he had found in the derwish order of Safi 'Ali Shah several years earlier.¹⁴⁸

Rosen offered a personal philosophical-religious reading of Rumi and Sufi Islam and did not attempt, as he noted, to formulate a full system of Sufi beliefs and practices. He provided a "condensation of my long life among Persian der-vishes", as he wrote to Littmann.¹⁴⁹ Emphasising his close-up relations with der-vishes was certainly good marketing to those into exotic mysticism. But in listing those derwishes as Hajji Mirza Hassan aka Safi 'Ali Shah, his friend Zahir ed-Dowleh, the scholar of Molla Sadra 'Emad ed-Dowleh, the Iranian envoy to Berlin Mahmud Khan Qajar Ehtesham al-Saltaneh and Mirza Ali Muhammad Khan Muaddil es-Saltaneh from Shiraz, Rosen's motivation was also to exhibit his loyalty to his teachers and to demonstrate the chains of transmission (silsila) of his mystical knowledge.¹⁵⁰ There was the Sufism he had gotten to know and practice, and it was his personal "Vertiefung" (immersion) in the *Masnavi* and the lessons he learned from these "silk Sufis" connected to the Qajar court of Iran that he intended to bring to an "educated German reading world".¹⁵¹ To that reading world he meant to impart this Sufi way:

Wer in religiöse Verzückerung gerät, der hat die Vereinigung mit Gott erlangt. Sein Glaube hat ihm geholfen. Der Weg war sein Ziel. Subjektiv Erlebtes ist für das Subjekt Wahrheit. Einen Beweis dafür ist man niemanden schuldig. Nur wenn man andere an dem selbst Erlebten teilnehmen lassen will, dann muss man eine Methode, einen Weg haben, auf dem die anderen zu demselben Ziele gelangen können.¹⁵²

148 Rosen had first heard the ghazal recited by his Afghan servant in Shimla in 1886. Georg Rosen and Friedrich Rosen, *Mesnevi*, 21; Goldziher, *Vorlesungen*, 171.

149 Friedrich Rosen to Enno Littmann, 25 March 1914, 4, 28 NL 245 EL, StaBiB.

150 Rosen's relations with the Ni'matollahi order in Iran, hierarchies, silsila and mystic practices were more detailed in the draft. Friedrich Rosen, Entwurf zu *Mesnevi*, 1912, ASWPC, 86, 145–147.

151 Georg Rosen and Friedrich Rosen, *Mesnevi*, 6–7.

152 "Who falls into ecstasy, has reached unity with God. His belief has helped him. The path was his goal. The subjectively lived through is for the subject truth. Proof one owes to no one. Only when one wants to let others take part in the lived through, one must find a method, have a path, on which others can reach the same goal." Georg Rosen and Friedrich Rosen, *Mesnevi*, 1–2.

This method was for Rosen encapsulated in the derwish orders that follow *tarikat* (method/ways) under the leadership of a *pir* (guide) seeking “Erkenntnis” or “erfan” that went beyond materialist knowledge in a manifestation of and unity with God.

These were neither the observations of an anthropologist, nor were they dusty book knowledge, but rather a fusion of reading Rumi and influences he picked up in Tehran. In deliberating on the Greek and Jewish influences on Rumi's *Masnavi* in a letter to Andreas, Rosen enthused: “Ich habe bei diesem Studium so viel Schönes und Eigenartiges gefunden, dass ich wirklich hoffe man wird sich einmal dem Studium der persischen Literatur zuwenden und zwar nicht nur vom Standpunkte der Sprachforschung, sondern auch von dem der Philosophie aus.”¹⁵³ Hoping to introduce these facets of Oriental life to his German audience, Rosen drew on a belief that he had shared and would come to embrace again more fully in his older days – despite sharing with his father the view that this introspection and self-annihilation was potentially inhibitive to social development.

For Rosen these mystical practices were the crystallised driving forces of the Islamic world. Reflective of the structure of the Sufi order he had been a part of under the leadership of Safi ‘Ali Shah, he found an authoritarian principle in the set-up of the Sufi orders that follow a guide. This Rosen connected to Semitic religions in general, tending to follow prophets and demi-Gods, and had not been perfused with “light and air” through renaissance and enlightenment, as had happened in the Occident.¹⁵⁴ In the derwish's attempt to reach unity with God in a state of exhilarating self-annihilation, he enters a state of non-existence. Rosen identified this practice of ritualised self-annihilation and departure from existence as central to the tenets of Sufi Islam. The Platonic idea of non-existence, which he saw in the Occident only as a “spirited game”, he experienced as all-pervasive in Iran at the time: “Die ganze Welt der Erscheinungen ist ein vorübergehendes Trugbild, während das wirklich Existierende seit aller Ewigkeit in der transzendenten Welt der Ideen, der vollkommenen Urbegriffe ruht.”¹⁵⁵ In the mind of Rosen, the “typical Muslim thinker is this Sufi”, who looks inwards,

153 “I have in these studies found so much beautiful and idiosyncratic, that I really hope one will one day turn to the study of Persian literature and at that not only from the approach of linguistics, but from that of philosophy.” Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 20 October 1912, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG.

154 Georg Rosen and Friedrich Rosen, *Mesnevi*, 14.

155 “The entire world of the appearances is a transient illusion, while the truly existing rests since all eternity in the transcendental world of the ideas, in the consummate first principles.” Georg Rosen and Friedrich Rosen, *Mesnevi*, 12.

and not outwards into the physical world. The ability to develop is thus inhibited, as all there is to know is already known. To illustrate this “swamping” of the intellect, Rosen recounted a visit to the tomb of Rumi in Konya in 1904, where only one of the Mevlevi order derwishes knew Persian, while all others had only memorised a few verses. He was shocked to find all ritual empty and as he thought without meaning. The backstory was that derwish orders came under sustained attack across the Middle East for their supposed backwardness and hysterical practice of religion. Sufi orders suffered from bureaucratic centralisation, and saw their social function decline amid the spread of modern forms of entertainment and the rise of secular organisations. But Rosen did not perceive of these socio-political circumstances that likely impeded on the Sufi practices he found in Konya – rather for him the fossilised and formulaic ritual stood at the long end of the development internal to derwishdom.¹⁵⁶ Comparing Rumi's thought to Christian ethics Rosen found in it a similar sense of responsibility for one's deeds and virtue – notably similar to Safi 'Ali Shah's teachings of progress and self-improvement. This measure of free will Rosen saw, however, hedged in acquiescence of one's fate, preventing the industriousness he found rooted in Christian ethics. Rosen concluded that “‘Islam’ means ‘devotion’, and Rumi's ethics does not transcend devotion.”¹⁵⁷

Into the last page of the introduction Rosen tucked his central argument. If the European historian and statesman ever intended to understand “the Orient from its inner life”, he could not dispense of a study of Sufi mysticism. This would be of overwhelming importance, Rosen posited, as Sufism contained the “driving and hemming ideas and forces” of Islamic communities. Only by grasping Sufism was it possible to think of ways for the Islamic world to develop organically from within and not be continuously accosted with counterproductive modernisation from outside.¹⁵⁸ Like his father, Rosen interpreted Sufi mysticism to be of central importance for the Islamic world and seventy years after the original publication he shared his father's view that the energies of Sufism had weakened. Neither of them grasped the larger forces of modernity at play in the Islamic world, but shaped by his interactions with the Ni'matollahi order of Safi

156 Georg Rosen and Friedrich Rosen, *Mesnevi*, 23–25; “Bericht über die Mitgliederversammlung der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft im Generalkonzilsaal der Universität Berlin am 14. November 1931 (19 Uhr),” *ZDMG* 85 (10) (1931): 68; Michael Gilsenan, “Some Factors in the Decline of the Sufi Orders in Modern Egypt,” *The Muslim World* 57, no. 1 (January 1967): 11–12; Bayat, “Anti-Sufism”; Kasravi, “Extracts from Sufism”; Lloyd Ridgeon, *Sufi Castigator: Ahmad Kasravi and the Iranian Mystical Tradition* (London: Routledge, 2006).

157 Georg Rosen and Friedrich Rosen, *Mesnevi*, 27–28; Nile Green, “Safi 'Ali Shah,” 101.

158 Georg Rosen and Friedrich Rosen, *Mesnevi*, 29.

'Ali Shah and the experience of the inhibitive consequences of European interference, Friedrich Rosen assigned to that very Sufi Islam the ability to become the motor for the organic development of the Islamic world. Had it been with Khayyam the "Aryan spirit in Semitic vest" that signified the independent value of Khayyam and the Persian culture, with Rumi Rosen followed the by then accepted discourse of Orientalist scholarship and shed the Aryan myth. Free thought and regard for the external material world, supposedly enabling development and modernisation, could also be found in a Sufi spirit that prefigured much of European high culture and civilisation. It only needed to be activated and Europe would need to leave the Islamic world alone.

At a time when the Aryan myth had gained traction in popular society across Europe, Rosen no longer offered an Aryan bridge of kinship but emphasised to a German audience his own lived experience of Sufi Islam, with his authority as "Orientkenner" implied. Conforming with the academic consensus that the Aryan as an analytical category was nonsensical, Rosen's *Mesnevi* republication was positively received in scholarly circles, but did not evoke the same popular response as the *Sinnsprüche*.¹⁵⁹ Both of these publications of Islamic-Persian poetry and culture were composite creations, part European scholarly discourse, part translation of Persian texts, part lived experience in the Persianate world. Although not knowledge productions of the purely imagined Orient, Rosen's Persian poetry interpretations spoke to an internationalised European knowledge system and were framed by his encounters in the Persianate world at the time of European high imperialism. Shaped by these political and scholarly influences and believing that his own lived experience of the Islamic world enabled him to present a faithful and sympathetic rendition of its culture, Rosen found in Rumi's *Masnavi* and the Khayyami *Ruba'iyat* the intellectual and artistic material to convey an image of a great Islamic-Persian culture to his German audience that in its otherness ought to be understood to grasp the interwoven and unified human spirit of all peoples that descended from classical antiquity. Opposing Europe's superiority claims and civilising mission, the German diplomat Rosen cloaked his political dissent in the translation of Persian poetry.

159 Friedrich Rosen to Enno Littmann, 18 February 1914, 2, 28 NL 245 EL, StaBiB; Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 2 October 1927, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Goldziher and Chambers Seelye, *Mohammed and Islam*, 184; Johannes Pedersen, August Fischer, and Friedrich Rosen, "Islam," in *Textbuch zur Religionsgeschichte*, Edvard Lehmann and Hans Haas (Leipzig: A. Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1922), 341–82; Nicholson, *Mathnawī of Rūmī*, xiv; Poliakov, *Mythe arien*, 290, 358–64; Motadel, "Iran and the Aryan," 124.

Chapter 7

Karl May's Jihad? Knowledge in German Orient Policy

1 Introduction

From the outset of the First World War, Germany pursued a strategy of sedition and revolutionising behind enemy lines. In countries of predominantly Muslim belief under British, French and Russian control this included the incitement to a supposed holy war, a jihad, against the imperial rulers. Upon entering the war on the side of Germany and Austria-Hungary in November 1914, the Ottoman government had the religious authorities proclaim jihad against Russia, France and Britain. In the following war years German and Ottoman political and military figures pursued joint, parallel and conflicting policies of revolutionising behind enemy lines. Primarily fighting a defensive war, the Ottoman Empire used the call to jihad as a tool for mobilisation and morale building. German jihad was by and large a propaganda affair, with a number of more or less centrally organised abortive missions to incite rebellion from Morocco to the Caucasus and Afghanistan. Most of these efforts failed to achieve their strategic goals. In the Ottoman war effort, jihad was successful across religious divides, drawing together Sunni Turks and Kurds and Arab Shi'ites, but the religious justification did not keep British supported Sunni Arab tribes from rising up and ejecting the Ottomans from the Arabian Peninsula. Religious solidarity beyond the Middle East did not become a factor in the war.

These events and circumstances have been variously discussed in recent years, often in the vein that Max von Oppenheim, the German Orientalist in the service of the *Auswärtiges Amt*, devised the policy of jihad and through whispering it into the ear of the mad German Kaiser wreaked havoc on the world in pursuit of world dominance. These accounts often hinge on the supposition that the Kaiser was the determinative factor on Germany's road to war and, indeed, the main cause of the war itself.¹ They disregard the various circles of policy- and decision-making between German politics, military and public that weighed on the Kaiser, influenced his decisions and were often more determinative of politics than the Kaiser himself.² The suggestion that Oppenheim was the prime orig-

¹ Röhl, *Aufbau der persönlichen Monarchie*; Röhl, *Weg in den Abgrund*; Röhl, *Jugend des Kaisers, 1859–1888*; Rubin and Schwanitz, *Nazis, Islamists*; Schwanitz, "Bellicose Birth of Euro-Islam."

² Hull, *Entourage*; Clark, *Herrschaft des letzten deutschen Kaisers*.

inator of the plan to revolutionise the Islamic world has also been proven as false. Similarly, the war time propaganda idea that it had been a jihad “Made in Germany” has been refuted.³

However, holy war was pursued by Germany, and the outrage this has caused gave rise to the question: why did no one know better and oppose such a policy? Various, the figure of this study, Friedrich Rosen, has been cited as *the* diplomat-Orientalist, who would after the war say that German Orient politics had been romantically inspired by the German author of Orient adventure novels Karl May, fed on the alliterations Berlin-Baghdad and Hamburg-Herat, and was conducted by opportunists prone to fantasy.⁴ In fact, starting in 1904 Rosen counselled on several occasions against assertive German Orient politics and a policy that counted on Pan-Islamic jihad as an asset in war.

Tracing the development of the thought of Rosen on German-Ottoman relations, on German views of Islam and the Islamic world, and the question of jihad in the build-up to and during the war itself, this chapter analyses how despite his recognised expertise Rosen’s knowledge was blinded out in this culmination of Wilhelmian Orient politics. To do so, Germany’s position in the world and the Middle East on a political level is first laid out, followed by an introduction to the German sedition programme at large. This is followed by a run-down of the rise of the sceptre of Islamic holy war in European perceptions, the jihad “Made in Germany” controversy from 1915 to now, and an overview of the idea of jihad, caliphate and other related notions and concepts that suffer(ed) from buzzwordisation.

Against this background Friedrich Rosen’s statements, reports and actions between 1901 and 1918 are analysed. What did Rosen see, relate to and learn? How, when, in which context and why did he express his opinions? When and why were his statements and actions influential in decision-making? These questions are pursued through six episodes between 1904 and 1918. The episodes show that Rosen’s positions were not stable, but developed with his career and his experiences between politics and academia. Rosen was driven by the conviction in the supremacy of power politics, which he believed should be understood as the guiding line for German foreign affairs. Within the world of no-

3 M. Hanisch, “Anti-imperiale Befreiung”; Mustafa Aksakal, “‘Holy War Made in Germany’? Ottoman Origins of the 1914 Jihad,” *War in History* 18, no. 2 (2011): 184–99.

4 Marchand, “Nazism, Orientalism and Humanism,” 302; Rubin and Schwanitz, *Nazis, Islamists*, 17; Kreutzer, *Dschihad für den Kaiser*; Torma, *Turkestan-Expeditionen*, 133; Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 446–47; Schwanitz, “Bellicose Birth of Euro-Islam,” 197; Hagen, “German Heralds,” 155; Müller, *Ġihād und Deutsches Reich*, 413; Berman, *Orientalismus, Kolonialismus und Moderne*, 42–164.

bility and business dominating Berlin, the bourgeois scholar and diplomatic wayfarer lacked the personal power-base to significantly shape policy between Auswärtiges Amt, chancellery, military and Kaiser, and could only bring his position to bear in singular events.

2 Germany into the Orient

In the summer of 1914, the European balance of power system between Great Britain, France, Germany, Russia and Austria-Hungary broke down after a number of crises between Germany, France and Great Britain over imperial interests and naval supremacy, and amid repeating clashes between Russia and Austria-Hungary over influence and control in the new nations and former provinces of the shrinking Ottoman Empire in the Balkans. At this point, the German Empire had long departed from its founding chancellor Otto von Bismarck's system of diplomatic reassurance through a tapestry of alliances to isolate likely revanchist France. After German unification economic and demographic growth had accelerated at a dazzling speed and international scientific discourse was conducted in German. Industrialists and capitalists between Ruhr, Elbe and Spree perceived of a world of sales and investment markets, and a new generation of nationalists pointed their acumen outwards into the world, to a German Empire envisioned on par with that of its European neighbours, with fleets, colonies and a new national mission to spread Germandom in the world.⁵ Regardless of whether Germany was just too late to the game, hamstrung by the nervousness, incapacity or grandstanding of its decision-makers, or denied its place under the sun by a British government fearing German continental preponderance, when war broke out on 28 July 1914, Germany found itself in a two-front war with only Austria-Hungary as its ally.⁶

While the war was ignited on the European continent, the European powers had by 1914 all but occupied and colonised the rest of the globe. Conflicts over spheres of influence had arisen frequently, as the space on the map without European overlords shrank, and empires, kingdoms and other polities in Asia and Africa were whittled away. Between the turn of the century and the outbreak of the war only a few more or less independent non-European polities remained.

⁵ Roger Chickering, *Imperial Germany and the Great War, 1914–1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 1–2; Perras, *Carl Peters*, 40–41; Reinbothe, *Deutsch als Wissenschaftssprache*; Petersson, “Kaiserreich in ökonomischer Globalisierung”; Smith, “‘Weltpolitik’ und ‘Lebensraum’.”

⁶ Schöllgen, *Deutsche Außenpolitik*, 81–82; Clark, *Schlafwandler*, 199, 216, 312–13.

Next to resurgent Japan, victorious over Russia in 1905, Ethiopia, having repelled Italy in 1896, and China, reeling from the aftermath of the Boxer Rebellion from 1899 to 1901, Afghanistan, Iran, Morocco and the Ottoman Empire remained as autonomous entities. Most had drastically shrunk in territorial size and sovereignty, and were heavily beset by the European powers. As Germany had entered world politics late, with a productive economy, a potent and often emulated military and by and large without overt territorial designs in the "Orient", it came to be seen as a potential partner against the imperial encroachments that threatened the survival of these latter four "Oriental" countries.⁷

Germany's relationship with Afghanistan until the outbreak of the war was close to non-existent. Despite efforts by parts of the Iranian establishment to draw in Germany more vigorously, German involvement with Iran did not surpass the establishment of diplomatic relations by much more than a few half-hearted military training missions, talk of railway concessions, unrealised state loans, the opening of a German school in Tehran and negligible if growing trade. Similarly, German economic expansion did not provoke a significantly heightened political interest in Morocco until 1905, and from then on without force. Well up to the war, the German political establishment considered its involvement in Iran and Morocco through the lens of European power politics and used its influence in the region as bargaining chips to achieve other goals in its dealings with the European powers. These Oriental bargaining chips could be aimed at driving a wedge between the Entente powers France and Britain or traded in for colonies in central Africa, as was the case with Morocco, or placating British and Russian interests in the Middle East in exchange for a freer hand in the Ottoman Empire, as was the case with Iran.⁸ Initiatives of Iranian or Moroccan rulers aimed at deepening ties with Germany, such as the Shahs' European journeys or similar attempts by the Moroccans, were mostly seen as bothersome to German wheeling on the European stage or would be used by the German government for ulterior goals. Relations were neither profound, particularly friendly or equitable, but in outward appearance cordial enough to unsettle Britain, Russia and France over German designs. With the Anglo-Russian convention of 1907 establishing Russian and British zones of influence in Iran and as a con-

7 Chickering, *Germany and the Great War*, 2; Osterhammel, *Verwandlung der Welt*, 900; Abbas Amanat, *Iran*, 390.

8 Valentine Chirol, *The Middle Eastern Question or Some Political Problems of Indian Defence* (London: John Murray, 1903), 185–97; Martin, *German-Persian Diplomatic Relations*; Morel, *Morocco in Diplomacy*; Pierre Guillen, *L'Allemagne et le Maroc de 1870 à 1905* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1967); Christopher Andrew, *Théophile Delcassé and the Making of the Entente Cordiale: A Reappraisal of French Foreign Policy, 1898–1905*. (London: Macmillan, 1968).

sequence of the first Moroccan crisis and the Algeciras conference cementing French dominance in Morocco, the two countries effectively ceased to exist as state actors.

The formerly vast Ottoman Empire, stretching from the Balkans, the Black Sea Khanates and the Caucasus in the north, to Algeria in the west and Sudan and Arabia in the south, had by the outbreak of the war shrunk to modern Turkey, the Levant and parts of Arabia. The Ottoman Empire was beset by nationalist movements threatening the unity of the multinational state, foreign controlled finances, a failing economy, outdated infrastructure and a weak military and navy. The Straits of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles were a strategic prize that Russia had been eyeing since the second half of the eighteenth century to guarantee its access to the Mediterranean, and the Ottoman Empire had lost large swathes of its northern territory to Russia and its allies.⁹ Britain exploited Ottoman weakness for establishing control along the Eastern Mediterranean, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf en route to India, but it also propped up the Sublime Porte as a strategic buffer against Russia until the end of the nineteenth century. In case of war, Russia and Britain were likely to consolidate their control or outright dismember the Ottoman Empire.

Similar to Iran and Morocco, the Ottomans had perceived of Germany as a potential ally, with burgeoning industries that could help develop the Ottoman economy, a military that had proved its mettle in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870/1 and without posing a direct risk of annexations. Ottoman wooing for German involvement was more successful. A consortium of German companies took on the development of the Ottoman railway system to Baghdad and the Hejaz, Ottoman officers were trained by the German army, and the German Kaiser liked to see himself as a friend of the Ottoman Sultan-Caliph Abdülhamid II (1876–1909) and pronounced himself as custodian of some 300 million Muslims world-wide on his visit to Ottoman Syria in 1898.¹⁰ After Abdülhamid was toppled by the reformist Young Turks in 1908, German-Ottoman relations cooled at first, but then saw a revival after the Balkan Wars 1912–3 and with the takeover by the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) triumvirate of officers Talaat Pasha, Djemal Pasha and the German trained Enver Pasha.

When the Great War broke out, the threat of Russian invasion and further British encroachments pushed the Ottoman echelons, particularly Enver, to

⁹ Mustafa Aksakal, *The Ottoman Road to War in 1914: The Ottoman Empire and the First World War*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1–5; Abulafia, *Great Sea*, 504–23.

¹⁰ Yorulmaz, *Arming the Sultan*; Fuhrmann, “Deutschlands Abenteuer im Orient”; Fuhrmann, “Bagdadbahn”; Fuhrmann, “German Colonial Desire”; Schöllgen, *Imperialismus und Gleichgewicht*, 120–75.

look to Germany for protection of its territorial integrity in order to continue its modernisation program.¹¹ Due to doubts that the Ottomans could deliver militarily Germany initially rejected an alliance, but four days into the war a secret German-Ottoman alliance was signed, with Turkey staying out of the war for the time being. Amid the failure of the German Schlieffen Plan and the war dragging on longer than expected, German military command became eager to draw the Ottomans into the war with the prospect of the Ottoman army attacking Russia in the Caucasus and diverting Russian troops from central Europe. Following weeks of CUP infighting, the Ottomans launched a surprise attack against Russia on the Black Sea coast on 29 October 1914, officially declaring war against the Entente powers in a series of proclamations between 7 and 11 November 1914.¹² The theatre of war had arrived in the Middle East.

3 German Sedition and the Spectre of Jihad in Europe

Next to conventional warfare, Germany pursued a wide-spun policy of sedition against the Entente powers from the outset of the war. Under the title “Unternehmungen und Aufwiegelung gegen unsere Feinde” (undertakings and incitements against our enemies) the German foreign office in coordination with the general command (Oberste Heeresleitung–OHL) sought to stir up unrest behind enemy lines through supporting political, ethnic and religious groups. Emissaries, propaganda leaflets, money and weapons were sent to social-democrats, Jewish Zionists, the Polish legion, the South African Boers, Irish nationalists, Crimean Tatars, Indian and Persian nationalists and a plethora of other actors worldwide. In order to destabilise British influence and control across Asia, particularly in India, and to prevent British and French colonial troops from being committed to the European fronts, the German incitement strategy between Maghreb and Bengal also sought to use religion as a weapon of insurrection. That weapon was to be Islam, its martial toolset of Oriental fanaticism, jihad or holy war, and the symbolic power of the caliphate to which all Mohammedans supposedly hailed and would pledge allegiance.

The idea was easy. Germany’s alliance with the Ottoman Empire would entail stirring up the Muslim world through a declaration of jihad against the un-

11 Fromkin, *Peace to End All Peace*, 46; Mustafa Aksakal, “Not ‘by Those Old Books of International Law, but Only by War’: Ottoman Intellectuals on the Eve of the Great War,” *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 15, no. 3 (2004): 536; Aksakal, *Ottoman Road to War*, 57; Kaynar, “Les jeunes Turcs et l’Allemagne.”

12 Aksakal, *Ottoman Road to War*, 93–118; Will, *Kein Griff nach der Weltmacht*, 13–19.

believers by the Ottoman sultan-cum-caliph, which would help ignite fanatic Oriental uprisings in French, Russian and British Muslim-majority territories in North Africa, southern Russia, India and bordering lands. The declaration of jihad would, of course, carefully exclude the caliph's allies Germany and Austria-Hungary, as jihad was thought to be potent stuff and could quickly spread everywhere, if not kept in check by religious authorities.¹³ Where did this belief in the potency of Islamic holy war stem from and how did this translate into a German war strategy in 1914?

Amid the decline of Muslim-majority countries and increasing European control reformist Pan-Islamic ideas in the vein of Sayyid Jamal al-Din al-Afghani had been gaining currency since the 1870s. When the Ottoman Empire came under more sustained pressure after Great Britain pulled its support for the Sublime Porte in the 1880s, Sultan Abdülhamid II used Pan-Islamic rhetoric as a foreign politics tool to play on the fears of his European antagonists.¹⁴ Pan-Islam, as formulated by al-Afghani and others Muslims thinkers, had initially been an ideology that advocated socio-political reform, but by the 1890s the emphasis shifted to resistance against imperialism. After the fall of the Mughal Empire in India, the Barbary states in North Africa and the disappearance of independent Muslim states around the middle of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire as the last remaining noteworthy Muslim power took on a renewed leadership role in the Islamic world. There was a sense of affinity between different Muslim communities, but culture, society and religious practice varied widely between Western Africa and South East Asia and the Ottomans were fully aware of this. As he privately admitted, Abdülhamid knew that he could not simply raise the Islamic world into rebellion against Europe.¹⁵ Pan-Islamic jihad was a rhetoric tool used in diplomacy, not a veritable wartime strategy.

The Ottoman public brandishing of the spectre of jihad against British, French and Russian encroachments were, however, perceived as credible by his European opponents, who had time and again struggled with opposition to annexation and uprisings articulated in Islamic vocabulary. The French had fought protracted campaigns against Abdel Qadir in Algeria, who led a defensive war against the Christian intruders in the name of Islam in the 1830s and 1840s.

¹³ Jenkins, "Fritz Fischer's 'Programme for Revolution'," 397–402; Fritz Fischer, *Griff nach der Weltmacht. Die Kriegszielpolitik des kaiserlichen Deutschland 1914/1918*. (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1961); Kreutzer, *Dschihad für den Kaiser*, 24; Fromkin, *Peace to End All Peace*, 168–215; Will, *Kein Griff nach der Weltmacht*, 204.

¹⁴ Müller, *Ġihād und Deutsches Reich*, 60; Marc Hanisch, "Anti-imperiale Befreiung," 27–29.

¹⁵ Valentine Chirol, *Pan-Islamism* (London: Central Asian Society, 1906), 2; Aksakal, "Ottoman Origins of Jihad," 191; Müller, *Ġihād und Deutsches Reich*, 61.

The Indian rebellion against the British in 1857 was equally seen in parts of the subcontinent as an anticolonial jihad, to which the British assigned enough significance to procure from the Ottoman sultan Abdülmecid (1839–1861) a proclamation to the Indian Muslims to remain loyal to the British. At the time the two countries were allies in the Crimean War against Russia in 1854–6, during which the Ottomans refrained from declaring jihad against Russia out of courtesy for their British partners at war. Nevertheless, Crimean Tatars of Muslim belief conceived of the war in terms of jihad, just as Dagestanis in the Caucasus had been framing their struggle against the expanding Russian Empire in the Murid War (1829–1859) in an Islamic vocabulary. The efficacy Islamic belief could unfold in mobilising wartime morale was thus already perceived during European wars of expansion in the earlier nineteenth century.

The exiling of al-Afghani from Egypt in 1879 and his subsequent travels across Europe further familiarised the European public with his Pan-Islamic ideas, and an argument that erupted between him and Renan resulted in a long debate about the character and role of Islam in world history between scholars from France, Russia, the Ottoman Empire and Iran.¹⁶ The Sudanese uprising against the Egyptian in 1881 and the murder of the British officer governing Egyptian Sudan, Charles Gordon, accentuated this particular European familiarisation with Islam. The establishment of the messianic Mahdi government in Khartoum, with key officials named caliphs (religious successors) and ansar (helpers from the time of the prophet's flight to Medina), and an uproar in the British press, impressed upon the European imagination the potential Islamic fanaticism could bring to a war against Europeans. By the time the Mahdist state crumbled under heavy Maxim-Gun fire in 1898, Islam had been ingrained into the European discourse as a potent weapon.¹⁷

In the 1870s, Orientalists such as the Hungarian Ármín Vámbéry and the German Franz von Werner aka Murad Effendi spoke of the potential of the Pan-Islamic idea as similar to the Christian “sport of modern crusade”. At the turn of the century the British journalist Valentine Chirol posited that it was beyond doubt that Muslims in India and elsewhere overcame their sectarian divisions to resist “the pressure of Christendom” and flogged to the last power of “militant Islam” that pursued an “earnest and thorough” pan-Islamic policy. Others disagreed. In mid-nineteenth century, Rosen’s father Georg opined that the “fanatic tendencies” ascribed to the Ottomans since the Greek War of Independence

¹⁶ Kreutzer, *Dschihad für den Kaiser*, 52; Medrow, *Moderne Tradition und religiöse Wissenschaft*, 67.

¹⁷ Fromkin, *Peace to End All Peace*, 97; Winston Churchill, *Kreuzzug gegen das Reich des Mahdi*, trans. Georg Brunold (Frankfurt: Eichborn, 2008); Ferguson, *Empire*, 264.

(1821–1832) were blown out of proportion and used by the Russians for legitimising their own warring. Later in the lead-up to the war, the British Islamicist Thomas Walker Arnold, who taught philosophy in the Punjab, could detect no Pan-Islamism in India as such, and found the Ottoman claims of representing world-wide Islam largely rejected by Muslims, who followed their own religious authorities. The Russian journalist Gabriel de Wesselitzki noted for Russia that there was “a revival of Mussulman feeling”, but that Muslims served loyally in the army, were privileged over Jews and that Pan-Islam was a non-issue. The Indian jurist and founding member of the All India Muslim League loyal to the British Empire, Syed Ameer Ali, discarded the idea of a unified Islamic world presented in European Pan-Islam debates, but warned:

If there is any feeling growing in the Mahomedan world in favour of union to assert the rights of Mahomedans against repression or attacks from without, it is due entirely to the extraneous cause of the pressure which is being put upon them by what are called the civilized Powers of Europe in their own interests. It is only natural that the Mahomedans of Algeria, of Morocco, and other parts of Africa, of Arabia, and of Central Asia, should object to be “civilized” at the point of the sword and the bayonet.¹⁸

The rise of meddlesome Germany to the global scene and Kaiser Wilhelm's visit to Constantinople and to the shrine of Salah ed-Din (Saladin) in Damascus, where the German Emperor pronounced German friendship with the 300 million Muslims, resulted in Islam becoming linked to Germany in many a European publication. British and French uneasiness as to German intentions and its supposed propping up of Muslim territories that were otherwise ripe for colonialisation was further amplified by Germany gaining concessions for railway constructions in the Ottoman Empire and with the landing of Wilhelm in Tangier in 1905.¹⁹

The German perception of Islam as a geo-strategic factor in a potential war was not only mimicking Entente fears as policy. Prompted by British suggestions to divide the Ottoman Empire into zones of influence in 1896, the *Auswärtiges Amt* realised that it had very little understanding about the discourses and events in the Near East and sent a self-financed observer of Arabic press, society

18 Müller, *Ġihād und Deutsches Reich*, 77–81; Tariq Rahman, *Interpretations of Jihad in South Asia. An Intellectual History* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018), 166; M. Naeem Qureshi, *Pan-Islam in British Indian Politics. A Study of the Khilafat Movement 1918–1924* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 9, 18–19, 33; Georg Rosen, *Vertilgung der Janitscharen bis zum Tode Machmuds II.*, 56–58; Chirol, *Pan-Islamism*.

19 Chirol, *Pan-Islamism*, 7; Morel, *Morocco in Diplomacy*, 85–87; Taylor, *Trouble Makers*, 110–12; Ferguson, *Empire*, 284–86.

and culture to the intellectual centre Cairo, Max von Oppenheim. Oppenheim wrote detailed reports to Berlin, often under the influence of the Pan-Islamic circles of Muhammad Abduh (1849–1905) and Rashid Rida (1865–1935), and the nationalists Sa'ad Zaghlul (1859–1927) and Muhammad Farid (1868–1919) close to the *al-Muayyad* newspaper, or describing British fears of Islam and its holy war. Oppenheim, neither a career diplomat nor integrated into the German foreign policy apparatus, was largely ignored by the Auswärtiges Amt and his reports discarded as fanciful, as Kreutzer showed. Rosen agreed, noting on one of Oppenheim's reports that "this historical sketch is entirely superficial and completely worthless". A fervent archaeologist, most importantly discovering and excavating Assyrian sites at Tell Halaf, Oppenheim did, however, gain access to the archaeology enthusiast Kaiser Wilhelm II and undergirded the Emperor's pro-Islamic leanings with the anti-colonialist and Pan-Islamic reformist ideas that circulated in Cairo.²⁰

Another impetus was that by the first decade of the twentieth century the German administration, public and academia came to realise that significant proportions of its colonial subjects in German East Africa, Togo and Cameroon were Muslim. In fact, the number of Muslims in German Africa had been rising due to renewed Muslim conversion efforts in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. This led to debates in Germany between Christian missionaries, who did not like the competition by Muslim preachers, and Islamicists like Carl-Heinrich Becker, who argued that Islam would be a good first civilisational step for Germany's African subjects, whom he thought unready for Christianity.²¹ German colonial administrations had encountered opposition to its rule in East Africa and feared the rise of Mahdi figures in Togo and Cameroon. The "Mecca Letter Affair" of 1905–9 in German East Africa brought the German Empire into open conflict with the Islam it was protecting elsewhere. The German administration intercepted copies of letters, supposedly from Mecca, that aimed to incite the Muslim population against the German occupiers and promised that "European rule would end". The letters originated with the Somaliland-based branch of the Qadiriya Sufi order with links to Arabs in Zanzibar, who had lost their ivory and slave businesses after the German take-over. Although the riots that the "Mecca letters" sparked were quickly suppressed, they evoked memories of pre-

²⁰ M. Hanisch, "Anti-imperiale Befreiung," 13–14, 25; Müller, *Ġihād und Deutsches Reich*, 59; Kreutzer, *Dschihad für den Kaiser*, 47, 55, 122.

²¹ Bradford G. Martin, "Muslim Politics and Resistance to Colonial Rule: Shaykh Uways B. Muhammad Al-Barawi and the Qadiriya Brotherhood in East Africa," *Journal of African History* 10, no. 3 (1969): 485; Habermas, "Debates on Islam in Imperial Germany," 234–40; Schwanitz, "Bellicose Birth of Euro-Islam."

vious “political initiatives with religious colouring” and the Maji Maji Uprising (1905–7) and reinforced fears in colonialist and missionary circles of a spreading “Islamic danger” in the German colonies. The colonial administration in German East Africa suggested to the central government in Berlin that the Ottoman Sultan should declare German East Africa as *Dar al-Islam* (abode/territory of Islam) to immunise the German colony from further jihadi resistance. In 1908, chancellor von Bülow and German ambassador to Constantinople Adolf Marschall von Bieberstein negotiated such an agreement with the Ottoman government and the religious authorities Sheikh ül-Islam and Fatva Emini, but it did not come into effect after Abdülhamid was toppled by the Young Turks that autumn.²²

Muslim fanaticism, Mahdist uprisings, and Pan-Islamic revolution rhetoric took on a dynamic of their own in the imaginations and knowledge constructions of European empires and in their pursuit of political interests. Even though there had not been any prolonged, coordinated, or successful transnational uprising driven by the silver bullet of Islam and despite knowledgeable voices publicly disputing the notion, in the lead-up to the war the sceptre of Islam and holy war loomed large on the European mindscape.

4 War Ambitions and Insurrections between Maghreb and Central Asia

As early as during the July crisis in 1914, Kaiser Wilhelm rumbled that all consuls across the Orient should “ignite the entire Mohammedan world into wild insurrection against this hated, mendacious, unconscionable people of peddlers; for if we shall bleed to death, then England shall at least lose India”. Foreign secretary Gottlieb von Jagow, who had the ear of the Kaiser, advocated revolutionising Egypt to cut off Britain’s access to India via the Suez Canal. Also Helmuth von Moltke, the controversial and by then overwhelmed chief of the general staff, pressed for the Ottoman Empire to enter the war on the side of Germany and Aus-

²² Martin, “Qadiriya Brotherhood in East Africa,” 477–84; Habermas, “Debates on Islam in Imperial Germany,” 246; Sebastian Gottschalk, *Kolonialismus und Islam. Deutsche und britische Herrschaft in Westafrika (1900–1914)* (Frankfurt: Campus, 2017), 10–16; Michael Pesek, “Kreuz oder Halbmond. Die deutsche Kolonialpolitik zwischen Pragmatismus und Paranoia in Deutsch-Ostafrika 1908–1914,” in *Mission und Gewalt. Der Umgang christlicher Missionen mit Gewalt und die Ausbreitung des Christentums in Afrika und Asien in der Zeit von 1792 bis 1918/19*, Ulrich van der Heyden and Jürgen Becher (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2000), 109.

tria-Hungary, to open a new front against Russia in the Caucasus, and to enable a policy of “stirring the fanaticism of Islam.”²³

Busy with excavations in Mesopotamia at the time, Oppenheim rushed back to Berlin and attached himself to the *Auswärtiges Amt*, where he began working out plans for revolutionising the Orient with the help of Islam (and “Israelites” and others). Oppenheim also reinforced the Kaiser’s line of threatening India, the jewel of Britain’s possessions.²⁴ Oppenheim went on to play a key role in the establishment of the *Nachrichtenstelle für den Orient* (NfdO), which planned, managed and oversaw various propaganda efforts in the Islamic world throughout the war. He also actively recruited Turkish, Arab, Indian and Iranian collaborators, as well as German Orientalists. But his infamous “*Denkschrift betreffend die Revolutionierung der islamischen Gebiete unserer Feinde*” (memorandum concerning the revolutionising of the Islamic regions of our enemies) did not, as Hanisch has demonstrated, have any impact on the declaration of war of the Ottoman Empire or its proclamation of jihad against the Entente powers in a series of fatwas in early November 1914.²⁵

Rather, a number of more or less highly placed Germans in diplomacy, military, big business and financing perceived of “a scope of action which suddenly offered itself against the background of the increasingly global war”, as Jonas and Zinke noted. These included the lowly diplomat Rudolf Nadolny, who with very limited experience or understanding of Iran, became “one of the crucial masterminds of German Middle East politics” in the political section of the OHL (general command), and the German general Colmar von Goltz, who had been training officers in the Ottoman Empire since the 1880s, and had maintained his military reputation in Germany. Von Goltz harboured ideas of a Euro-Asiatic empire reaching via Iran and Afghanistan to India, under German leadership to be sure, and thought that a jihad declaration of the Ottoman Empire would further this cause, without having any “realistic perception, not to speak of concepts for how the conflictual mix of peoples in Asia minor, Northern

23 Fuhrmann, “Deutschlands Abenteuer im Orient,” 91; Will, *Kein Griff nach der Weltmacht*, 56; M. Hanisch, “Anti-imperiale Befreiung,” 13.

24 Unternehmungen und Aufwiegungen gegen unsere Feinde. 1914, Allgemein, R 20936, PA AA; Teichmann, “Max Freiherr von Oppenheim,” 245; Max von Oppenheim, Bericht, 7 September 1914, A 20944, R 21028, PA AA; Martin Kröger, “Archäologien im Krieg: Bell, Lawrence, Musil, Oppenheim, Frobenius,” in *Das große Spiel. Archäologie und Politik zur Zeit des Kolonialismus (1860–1940)*, Charlotte Trümpler (Essen: Ruhr Museum, 2008), 448–61; Jacob M. Landau, *Pan-Islam. History and Politics* (London: Routledge, 2016), 105.

25 Max von Oppenheim, *Denkschrift betreffend die Revolutionierung der islamischen Gebiete unserer Feinde*, October–November 1914, R 20938, PA AA; M. Hanisch, “Anti-imperiale Befreiung,” 13–17; Will, *Kein Griff nach der Weltmacht*.

Africa, Arabia and Persia should be stably integrated in an empire", as Lemke has found.²⁶ Despite German ambassador Hans von Wangenheim in Constantinople repeatedly voicing his scepticism regarding the potential of the Ottoman Empire and doubting its ability to rouse the Islamic world into war, the *Auswärtiges Amt* began to pursue a policy of global insurrection – with Islam playing its part – from the outset of the war. The key role was played by undersecretary of state Arthur Zimmermann, whose strategy of revolutionising the Orient was more based on blind belief than knowledge, as Kröger, Jonas and Zinke have shown.²⁷ Looked upon favourably by the Kaiser, Zimmermann may have wanted to ingratiate himself with his sovereign, thus coming to disregard opposing views.

But between his colleagues in the *Auswärtiges Amt*, in the military and in general society there were enough voices reinforcing his line of action. The German envoy in Stockholm relayed the advice of renowned Swedish explorer-Orientalist Sven Hedin that the Ottoman Sultan-Caliph could get the Emir of Afghanistan to cause uprisings in India, as the Emir "burns of desire to break forth against English rule in India." The industrialist Mannesmann brothers, who had gotten a taste for the economic possibilities of the Maghreb in the early 1900s, suggested raising restive Berber tribes in Morocco against the French and connecting with the Senussiyya order in Cyrenaica to threaten the British in Egypt and put pressure on the Suez Canal.²⁸ Economic interests in Iran and the Persian Gulf, often frustrated by British preponderance, motivated the Hamburg-based trading house Wöckhaus and Albert Ballin's shipping empire to advocate "striking" towards the Karun river, where petroleum was the great price.²⁹ Individuals across Germany and elsewhere – some "experts on the Orient", oth-

26 Michael Jonas and Jan Zinke, "'Wir standen mit der Zukunft im Bunde'. Rudolf Nadolny, das Auswärtige Amt und die deutsche Persienpolitik im Ersten Weltkrieg," in *Erster Weltkrieg und Dschihad. Die Deutschen und die Revolutionierung des Orients*, Wilfried Loth and Marc Hanisch (München: Oldenbourg, 2014), 61–65; Bernd Lemke, "Globaler Krieg: Die Aufstands- und Eroberungspläne des Colmar von der Goltz für den Mittleren Osten und Indien," in *Erster Weltkrieg und Dschihad. Die Deutschen und die Revolutionierung des Orients*, Wilfried Loth and Marc Hanisch (München: Oldenbourg, 2014), 60.

27 Martin Kröger, "Im wilden Kurdistan – Die militärische Expedition in der Osttürkei 1914–1916," in *Erster Weltkrieg und Dschihad. Die Deutschen und die Revolutionierung des Orients*, Wilfried Loth and Marc Hanisch (München: Oldenbourg, 2014), 145–46; Jonas and Zinke, "Nadolny und deutsche Persienpolitik," 63.

28 Kröger, "Militärische Expedition in der Osttürkei," 146; Franz von Reichenau to Arthur Zimmermann, 28 August 1914, R 21028, PA AA; Müller, *Ġihād und Deutsches Reich*, 201–3.

29 Brodacki, "Hamburg und der Persische Golf"; Rudolf Theuden, *Was muß uns der Krieg bringen?* (Berlin: Concordia Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1914), 5; Stefan M. Kreutzer, "Wilhelm Waßmuß – Ein deutscher Lawrence," in *Erster Weltkrieg und Dschihad. Die Deutschen und die Revolutionierung des Orients*, Wilfried Loth and Marc Hanisch (München: Oldenbourg, 2014), 97.

ers from that Orient – offered their services to the *Auswärtiges Amt*, out of patriotism to Germany, for want of adventure or cash, or perceiving of the advantageous situation the war was bound to create for oppressed peoples far and wide in removing the yoke of oppression. Germany's potential ally, the Ottoman Empire, was also promoting the possibility of riling up Iran and Afghanistan in a war against the Entente. As Fuhmann showed, Enver Pasha was initially opposed to the jihad policy, but if that was what would get the OHL to agree to an alliance with the Ottomans, the Germans should have it.³⁰

Germany's two-front military confrontation required alternatives for warfare action and the collapse of the international European power system opened up new possibilities for partnership with the extra-European world. Under the adverse conditions of the war and the patriotism it whipped up, voices warning of the weakness of the Ottoman Empire were less and less heard and an alliance with the Ottoman Empire and the Islamic world appeared to many as a viable option that, as Ferguson noted, "could have been a masterstroke of German strategy". Not entirely implausibly but as it turned out unrealistically, the main hope on the side of the Germans was that the Ottoman Empire would open a second front against the Russians and that Constantinople should become Germany's springboard for forward action into Asia and Africa. That the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire could also call for holy war and raise Pan-Islam was a bonus to this military-political strategy that, it was hoped, should reinforce Germany's sedition policy behind enemy lines. Born out of weakness rather than strength, as Will argued, Germany reacted "asymmetrically" to the preponderant power and resources of its adversaries. This was not a strategic master plan, but German policy developed tactically drawing on whatever opportunities presented themselves and in line with the larger progress of the war.³¹

Despite stumbling haphazardly into a war in far-flung places that were all but unknown to the men making decisions, the German agitations, expeditions and propaganda efforts to revolutionise the Middle East with the help of Islam did not all result in failure. There were tactical successes and positive strategic effects of German meddling on the movement of troops and strategic considerations of the Entente powers. An expedition to the petroleum sources near the Karun, led by the military officer Fritz Klein, managed in early 1915 to convince the Shi'ite clergy at Kerbala with the help of the Iranian consulate to issue a number of fatwas to incite the Shi'ite tribes of southern Iraq against the British.

30 *Unternehmungen und Aufwiegelungen gegen unsere Feinde*. 1914, Allgemein, R 20936, PA AA; Hans von Wangenheim to Arthur Zimmermann, 30 August 1914, A 17312, R 21028, PA AA; Fuhmann, "Deutschlands Abenteuer im Orient," 31.

31 Ferguson, *Empire*, 300; Will, *Kein Griff nach der Weltmacht*, 205, 315.

As Veltzke shows though, this instrumentalisation of Islam was not planned or directed from Berlin, but was rather trumped up by Klein himself on suggestion of his interpreter, a carpet trader from Iran, who thought that religious backing would be beneficial for the mission.³² The attacks on British oil pipelines around Karun came to some initial success, but were, as the war proceeded, reversed. As Ottoman troops attacked Iran in the north, a pan-Islamic solidarity between Ottoman Empire and Iran failed to materialise, making it easier for the British to operate in southern Iran and Mesopotamia. But Klein's counselling with the Mujtahids of Kerbala was at least moderately successful with regards to encouraging Shi'ite clergy in Iran to oppose foreigners, lending some legitimacy to German activities in Iran.

Agitations were most successfully carried out by Wilhelm Wassmuss, who developed significant ties with several tribes in southern Iran, offsetting British activities from Basra and Bushehr. In the duration of the war Wassmuss' activities necessitated significant increases of British troops sent from India to southern Mesopotamia, finally resulting in the setting up of the South Persia Rifles under Percy Sykes. As Will demonstrates, Wassmuss' insurrection strategy in Iran became the most cost-effective of all German undertakings in the Orient, tying up British Indian resources that could otherwise have been mobilised on European battlegrounds.³³ Originally, Wassmuss had been tasked to lead Germany's mission to Afghanistan via Persia, but had resigned in protest over the mission coming under Ottoman control. The adventurers sent by the Auswärtiges Amt to Constantinople had evoked the immediate distrust of the Ottoman authorities, as they publicly boasted of their mission and did not fit the image of orderly and disciplined Prussian military. By the spring of 1915 the Afghanistan mission went ahead regardless, now under the contested leadership of the military officer Oskar von Niedermayer, qualified by a two-year geographical expedition in Iran, Werner Otto von Hentig, a diplomat with experience in Beijing, Russia and Iran, and the Indian nationalist Mahendra Pratap, who served the mission as a symbolic figurehead. The mission was predicated on a number of war variables going according to plan, such as an Ottoman success against Russia in the Caucasus, push-back of the British along the Persian Gulf and the win-

³² Veit Veltzke, "'Heiliger Krieg' – 'Scheinheiliger Krieg': Hauptmann Fritz Klein und seine Expedition in den Irak und nach Persien 1914–1916," in *Erster Weltkrieg und Dschihad. Die Deutschen und die Revolutionierung des Orients*, Wilfried Loth and Marc Hanisch (München: Oldenbourg, 2014), 119–23.

³³ Wassmuss had to abandon his diplomatic codebook to avoid arrest, later enabling the British to read the Zimmermann telegram in 1917. Kreutzer, "Waßmuß," 102–13; Fromkin, *Peace to End All Peace*, 200–209; Will, *Kein Griff nach der Weltmacht*, 250–96.

ning over of the Iranian government to the side of the Central Powers. The mission was beset by ill-defined leadership, with Niedermayer and Hentig quarrelling and double-reporting to their superiors in Tehran and Constantinople, who were themselves under considerable pressure amid the unclear political situation in the Gallipoli campaign on the Dardanelles (1915–6). After trailing six weeks through the Persian desert to Afghanistan and losing several members of their mission to Russian reconnaissance troops, the situation did not improve upon arrival in Afghanistan. While assuaging the British resident in Kabul that his country would stay neutral, the Afghan Emir Habibullah asked for 20,000 German and Ottoman troops before declaring holy war. When the Arab revolt started in 1916 and the pro-German nationalist government of Iran was pushed out of Tehran in 1916, the Afghanistan mission was abandoned.³⁴ Other missions and activities in North Africa, the Caucasus and Southern Asia produced even fewer concrete results.

It is difficult to gauge the overall effectiveness of Germany's World War I activities in the larger Middle East with the help of supposed Islamic fanaticism in terms of political-military categories, as there was no general strategy with clearly defined goals against which success could be measured. Rather, German engagement in the Islamic world was characterised by a perception of "asymmetrical warfare being a self-evident part of strategy," as Kröger notes.³⁵ Particularly with regards to binding British and French troops, the German efforts at "agitation" produced the hoped for outcomes in a few locations. However, if the words of the Kaiser, Moltke, Oppenheim and others at the outset of the war are taken literally, the German effort to draw on Islam as a source of strategic or even only tactic advantage was a failure, even if there were instances when a pro-German fatwa happened to be proclaimed in Kerbala.

German manipulation of Islam was unsuccessful and noticeably so from the early months of the war for those involved in its running in the *Auswärtiges Amt*, like the Orientalist-diplomats Curt Prüfer, Oppenheim himself and Karl Emil Schabinger von Schwonningen. Partially this was due to chronic underfunding by the German government. Oppenheim or individuals, who offered to self-finance their missions, signified the voluntary character of the campaign and the broad appeal the holy war mantra had brought about, but also the lack of

³⁴ Kreutzer, "Waßmuß," 99–100; Hughes, "German Mission to Afghanistan," 455, 461–63, 471–73; Fromkin, *Peace to End All Peace*, 208.

³⁵ Kröger, "Militärische Expedition in der Osttürkei," 145.

centralised coordination.³⁶ The propaganda efforts of the Nachrichtenstelle für den Orient (NfdO) in Berlin was of some use to counter Entente propaganda, and in the French controlled Maghreb songs praising Kaiser Wilhelm and other vernacular forms of pro-German sentiment abounded, but could not, despite the ever wider employment of arguably culturally skilled Orientalists and Orientals, sway public opinion significantly into the German direction – also not when this was cloaked in Islamic rhetoric.³⁷ Spontaneous anti-British and anti-French revolts during the war were the exception rather than the rule, and Muslims from all over the Orient joined British and French armies in fighting the Central Powers and the German “friends” of Islam. Attempts to turn Muslim Entente prisoners of war through the supposedly culturally appropriate discussion of Ibn Khaldun (and other activities) in German prison camps were equally unsuccessful.³⁸

The presupposition that Muslims would run into the sword if only told by a Muslim leader was, one would think, finally disillusioned when the Arab revolt in 1916 diminished the Ottoman empire of the holy places of Mecca and Medina and the attached symbolic capital of its Islamic credibility as the custodians of the Holy Places.³⁹ Perhaps the fighting potential of Islam was no longer a driving factor after the Arab revolt, but German engagement in the larger Middle East continued, particularly around the flanks of the Ottoman Empire and with renewed energy after the collapse of the Russian Empire. The machinery of the NfdO had become institutionalised, with printing presses, publishing teams and distribution networks established through embassies and consulates. The German army was deeply engrained in the Ottoman military and with the war

36 Schabinger von Schowingen, *Mosaiksplitter*, 105–8; Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 446; Landau, *Pan-Islam*, 99; Tim Epkenhans, *Die iranische Moderne im Exil. Bibliographie der Zeitschrift Käve, Berlin 1916–1922* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 2000), 27.

37 Hagen, “German Heralds,” 146; Müller, *Ġihād und Deutsches Reich*, 164–68; Tilman Lüdke, *Jihad Made in Germany: Ottoman and German Propaganda and Intelligence Operations in the First World War* (Münster: LIT-Verlag, 2005); Lüdke, “(Not) Using Political Islam”; Will, *Kein Griff nach der Weltmacht*, 224.

38 *Les gouns mixtes Marocains pendant la campagne 1914–1918* (Casablanca: G. Mercié, 1920); Christian Koller, ‘Von Wilden aller Rassen niedergemetzelt’. *Die Diskussion um die Verwendung von Kolonialtruppen in Europa zwischen Rassismus, Kolonial- und Militärpolitik* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2001); Ferguson, *Empire*, 303; Hagen, “German Heralds,” 154.

39 Marc Hanisch, “Curt Prüfer – Orientalist, Dragoman und Oppenheims ‘man on the spot’,” in *Erster Weltkrieg und Dschihad. Die Deutschen und die Revolutionierung des Orients*, Wilfried Loth and Marc Hanisch (München: Oldenbourg, 2014), 181–89.

totalised there was no room for cutting deals via the East. Germany and its Ottoman ally continued fighting together.⁴⁰

What was improvised and chaotic in Berlin looked resourceful and subversive from Cairo, Delhi and London. Afraid of the Muslim bogeyman, the British took the German endeavours seriously and feared German activation of fanatic Islam, as was encapsulated in the propaganda book *Greenmantle* by the later British director of information John Buchan. The German mission to Afghanistan, Percy Sykes found, was “a source of the gravest anxiety in India”. In Egypt the British feared for the safety of the Suez Canal, causing the British High Commissioner McMahon to stoke the flames of Arab nationalism by promising the Hashemite Sharif Hussein an Arab state, which would by 1916 lead to the Ottoman loss of the Holy Places in Mecca and Medina.⁴¹ The German Islam policy in the larger Middle East struck fear into British strategic considerations. It tied down significant resources and manpower and as such fulfilled the promise of asymmetric warfare. But Britain’s response was overwhelming. Intensifying efforts away from European battlegrounds, it brought the full weight of its empire to bear and with its own sedition programme crushed what was left of the Ottoman Empire.

Germany’s political Islam euphoria had only really started a few years before the war. It was not matched by concrete knowledge of what Islam was, meant, how it worked as a belief in its theological, legal and political dimensions, or what role Islam played in the lives of people in the varying cultures and societies where it prevailed. Devoid of any of these considerations Islam was decontextualised, dehumanised and reduced to a fanaticism that could be activated into terrible jihad, if only called for by the pope-like caliph in Constantinople. As such, the German government’s reading of Islam in 1914 was not any less essentialist, reductionist and functionally adjusted towards its own power-objectives than that of France, Britain or Russia. This was regardless of Germany

40 [Hassan Taqizadeh] Von einem persischen Patrioten, *Persien und der europäische Krieg* (Berlin: Karl Curtius, 1915); Mohammed Alsulami, “Iranian Journals in Berlin during the Interwar Period,” in *Transnational Islam in Interwar Europe. Muslim Activists and Thinkers*, Götz Nordbruch and Umar Ryad (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 164; Gerhard Höpp, *Arabische und islamische Periodika in Berlin und Brandenburg 1915–1945. Geschichtlicher Abriss und Bibliographie* (Berlin: Das Arabische Buch, 1994).

41 Ahmed K. al-Rawi, “John Buchan’s British-Designed Jihad in *Greenmantle*,” in *Jihad and Islam in World War I. Studies on the Ottoman Jihad on the Centenary of Snouck Hurgronje’s “Holy War Made in Germany”*, Erik-Jan Zürcher (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2016), 329; Eugene Rogan, “A Century after Sykes-Picot,” *Cairo Review of Global Affairs*, no. Fall (2015). <https://www.thecairereview.com/essays/a-century-after-sykes-picot/>; Fromkin, *Peace to End All Peace*, 327.

being in it for world domination, just for a place in the sun or Oppenheimian “anti-imperial liberation from above”, as Hanisch calls it.⁴² This crudely distorted matrix of Islam through which German officials viewed the Orient and made political decisions in the lead-up to and during the war was not formed in long-standing traditions of knowledge acquisition of the foreign, but was hastily and indiscriminately assembled amid the usurping rise of the German Empire as an awry means of comprehending policy options. Underlying this was a more pronounced form of Orientalism, largely removed from academic Orientalistik and rather dominated by exotic-romantic desire, opportunity-seeking and patriotic-heroic make-believe, which in the thralls of war came – next to industrial warfare – to dominate German politics outside Europe, finishing off the remnants of Realpolitik in exchange for the Wunderwaffe jihad.

5 The “Made in Germany” Controversy. Trajectories and Rebuttals

During the war a transnational debate between academia, general public and propaganda machineries was fought over whether the declaration of war by the Ottoman Empire in 1914, formulated as jihad, was genuine or not, and if German involvement constituted travesty. This controversy has been picked up again in the 1990s with the rise of the sceptre of Islamism. In these recent discussions Rosen's Karl May simile is often mentioned as the one opposing voice, but without considering the background of his criticism. In order to situate Rosen's interventions in the lead up to and during the war, it is useful to run through the development of the original altercations and its re-make a century later.

In January 1915, the Islamicist and councillor to the Dutch colonies Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje levelled the accusation against Germany that the jihad proclaimed by the Ottomans in November 1914 was “Made in Germany” and not authentically Ottoman. Snouck Hurgronje argued that jihad was a phenomenon in Islam that had come to an end in medieval times, and was no longer actively pursued by modern Turkey, particularly since the fall of Abdülhamid II and the rise of the liberal modernisers of the CUP. Snouck Hurgronje attacked primarily his German colleagues Carl-Heinrich Becker for reversing his 1910 position, saying that “solidarity in Islam is a phantom”, and Martin Hartmann, an Islamophobe before his time, who had before the war claimed that “Islam is a religion of hate and of war. It must not be suffered to be the ruling principle

42 M. Hanisch, “Anti-imperiale Befreiung”; L. Hanisch, *Becker und Hartmann*, 88.

in a nation of the civilised world.” Snouck Hurgronje accused them of betraying their “scientific conscience” for the interests of war politics and falling for the “jihad craze”.⁴³ While his critique of his colleagues was stringent, Snouck Hurgronje minimised jihad to the meaning of holy war in the popular sense without venturing into explaining its meaning and history and presupposed that Islam was on its way out – as it should be for the purpose of civilisational progress. Perhaps characteristically for the neutral position he could take as a Dutchman, Snouck Hurgronje also attacked the British for mistaking the caliphate as “a kind of Mohammedan papacy” and talking up the threat of jihad in the late nineteenth century, saying that “Turkish statesmen made clever use of this error.”⁴⁴ He studiously avoided mention of his own encounters with religiously infused political resistance against Dutch colonialism in predominantly Muslim Aceh in the Dutch East Indies, claiming that Dutch education programmes were getting the better of Islam. Snouck Hurgronje’s weakest argument was at the same time his key message, namely that the Ottoman jihad was “Made in Germany”. The only evidence he offered was that the jihad declaration spoke of 300 million Muslims worldwide – the number of Muslims Wilhelm II. declared himself friend of at Salah ed-Din’s grave in 1898.⁴⁵

Snouck Hurgronje’s charges gave voice to prevalent suspicions in France and Great Britain. They had to be answered. Some German Orientalists, like Hartmann, read Snouck Hurgronje’s attack as a violation of Dutch neutrality. Becker responded in an attempt to dispel the image of the jihad being masterminded by Germany. He reframed jihad as something non-fanatic and part of an authentic national awakening, “an instrument of modernizing cultural autonomy and self-definition”, as Moshfegh contended.⁴⁶ The former German consul in Smyrna Gottfried Galli chimed in with the argument that the perfidious imperial politics of France and Great Britain had not brought civilisation to the Islamic world but rather betrayal and exploitation. Just like Germany had been oppressed in Europe, the jihad against oppression in the Orient was as holy as Germany’s war

⁴³ Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, *The Holy War “Made in Germany”* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1915), 51–68.

⁴⁴ Snouck Hurgronje, *Made in Germany*, 25–28.

⁴⁵ Snouck Hurgronje, *Made in Germany*, 47, 72, 79.

⁴⁶ Jung, “Lessons for the Contemporary ‘Area Studies’ Controversy,” 252; Snouck Hurgronje, *Made in Germany*, 65; Moshfegh, “Race, Religion and Orient in *Islamwissenschaft*,” 139; L. Harnisch, *Becker und Hartmann*, 82–96.

in Europe.⁴⁷ Like many of his German colleagues, who looked down on Islam, the key figure in the debate on the German side Becker was at an argumentative disadvantage. His view of the role of Islam in Africa had not been dissimilar to that of Snouck Hurgronje before the war, and he had been entirely apolitical when it came to the Orient, when writing still in 1914 that “not politically, no, geistig (spiritually-intellectually) the Orient must become ours!”⁴⁸ Patriotism now required a politicised reversal of argumentation, which made him not particularly convincing, considering that everyone in European Orientalism had been closely reading each other's publications for decades. Nöldeke and Goldziher stayed out of the public debate, but privately defended the “use of all means in this ‘struggle of existence’”.⁴⁹

A year later Snouck Hurgronje's accusation was reinforced by Buchan's *Greenmantle*, leaving behind in the Western reading of the war an image of nasty German orchestration of jihad without any Ottoman, Arab, Persian or Indian agency in the matter. The German memoirs literature of the post-war period contributed to this perception. Amid a lingering inferiority complex vis-a-vis Lawrence of Arabia, Oskar von Niedermayer glorified his exploits and in the Nazi era the goal was to fortify an image of betrayed German greatness.⁵⁰ Fischer's *Griff nach der Weltmacht / Germany's Aims in the First World War* then for the first time drew attention to Oppenheim's Denkschrift, but misidentified its date of writing, submission, and filing, thus assigning to the Denkschrift a decisive

47 Jung, “Lessons for the Contemporary ‘Area Studies’,” 252–53; Gottfried Galli, *Dschihad. Der heilige Krieg des Islams und seine Bedeutung im Weltkriege unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Interessen Deutschlands*. (Freiburg: C. Troemer's Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1915), 10–17.

48 Hagen, “German Heralds,” 148–50; Becker, “Die orientalischen Wissenschaften. Der Vordere Orient und Afrika,” 1185–86; Epkenhans, *Iranische Moderne im Exil*, 16.

49 Nöldeke and Goldziher stayed out of the war effort of the Central Powers. Becker's engagement was primarily consigned to the public debate with Snouck Hurgronje. Also qua his position in the Auswärtiges Amt co-funded SOS Hartmann took on a more prominent role in the propaganda efforts of the Nfdo in Germany and abroad. Other Orientalists who worked for the Nfdo included Eugen Mittwoch, Oskar Mann and Enno Littmann. Landau, *Pan-Islam*, 106; Marchand, “Nazism, Orientalism and Humanism,” 284; Carl-Heinrich Becker, *Das türkische Bildungsproblem* (Bonn: Friedrich Cohen, 1916), Jung, “Lessons for the Contemporary ‘Area Studies’,” 252; Wilhelm Wassmuss, “Bericht,” A 20636, R 21028, PA AA (Berlin, 1914).

50 al-Rawi, “Jihad in *Greenmantle*”; Oskar von Niedermayer, *Im Weltkrieg vor Indiens Toren. Der Wüstenzug der deutschen Expedition nach Persien und Afghanistan* (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1936); Oskar von Niedermayer, *Krieg in Irans Wüsten. Erlebnisse der deutschen Expedition nach Persien und Afghanistan* (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1941); Seidt, *Berlin, Kabul, Moskau*, 191; Will, *Kein Griff nach der Weltmacht*, 30.

influence it did not have. It had in fact not been read.⁵¹ The Denkschrift, misread as strategy, became a piece of evidence in Fischer’s argument that Germany reached for world domination, resulting in the war guilt discussion of the 1960s. Taking his cue from Fischer, in the 1990s McKale developed on the theme of German engagements in the Middle East in his *War by Revolution* and a number of articles, sifting through mostly German archival records and significantly expanding the analysis of German engagements with the Ottoman Empire and the Arabs during the war. McKale maintained the focus on Germany being the driving force behind Ottoman jihad, as orchestrated by Oppenheim and the Kaiser in an anti-civilisational endeavour but detached this from Fischer’s larger analysis of German global war goals. Often using the words “Arab” and “Muslim” interchangeably and McKale’s statement that Islam is more Islamic in Arabia than elsewhere betrays a lack of insight.⁵² McKale’s work was initially not widely discussed. As general political readings, the late David Fromkin’s 1989 *A Peace to End All Peace* covered the matter of German interests and entanglements in the Middle East and situated the German-Ottoman alliance and its usage of Islam and Islamic concepts and symbols in the larger history of the Great War.⁵³

With the al-Qaeda terror attacks on 9 September 2001 framed in terms of jihad, the resulting “War on Terror”, definitions of an “Axis of Evil”, the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, further attacks by al-Qaeda and copy-cat organisations, and rising Islamophobia, jihad became topical again. This topicality is reflected in studies of “German jihad” by Schwanitz, Küntzel and McMeekin that incorporated a reading of McKale but left out a proper reading of Fromkin. Considering the factual and analytical falsehoods developed to fit ideological parameters, the activism presented as scholarship by Küntzel is unnerving and the publication of McMeekin by a respectable publishing house surprising. With Küntzel this appears to be born out of an internalised guilt over the Holocaust, which taints all of Germany and Germanness. Teleologically tying 1914

51 Jenkins, “Fischer’s ‘Programme for Revolution’,” 399–406; M. Hanisch, “Anti-imperiale Befreiung,” 16; Schabinger von Schowingen, *Mosaiksplitter*, 115; von Oppenheim, Denkschrift betreffend die Revolutionierung.

52 Donald M. McKale, *War by Revolution: Germany and Great Britain in the Middle East in the Era of World War I* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1998); Donald M. McKale, “German Policy Toward the Sharif of Mecca, 1914–1916,” *The Historian* 55, no. 2 (1993): 303–14; Donald M. McKale, “Germany and the Arab Question in the First World War,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 29, no. 2 (April 1993): 236–53; McKale, “Germany and the Arab Question before World War I”; McKale, “‘The Kaiser’s Spy’.”

53 Fromkin, *Peace to End All Peace*.

Wilhelmian jihad politics with Nazi Germany's persecution of the Jews and the supposed single-handed German infestation of the Arabs with antisemitism, a "we" of Germans today is inflicted with a duty to counter Arab antisemitism and intifada-jihad before it destroys Israel and thus perpetrates a second Holocaust. After all "we" started it all, but can now prove that we have learned our lesson and are good now. Underlying is a simplistic reading of good and evil, right and wrong, and we and them.⁵⁴ McMeekin's "incorrect spin", claiming to follow Fischer, but "inflat[ing] the importance of jihad to an unacceptable degree, analysing all of Germany's strategies in the Middle East, whether they had to do with Islam or not, as forms of jihad" has been sufficiently refuted by Jenkins.⁵⁵ Schwanitz, a senior historian, is connected to Küntzel and McMeekin by his presentism, his insipid language, making Oppenheim "Abu Jihad", his analysis of the war in 1914 in the context of a supposed contemporary Huntingtonian clash of civilisations, his simplistic reading of the entire Islamic world as a monolithic entity, and a mashing up of Islamism and Nazism.⁵⁶ Or as Kris Manjapra has noted:

Some writers invoke the murky concept of 'Islamofascism' to infuse the politics of the present with the traumas of the past. But, fundamentally, in the racialised fetishism of the European Enlightenment today, we sense the great anxiety over the geopolitical instability in our world, and the desire by privileged, self-consciously 'Western' groups to codify the world and maintain a historicism of Europe-centred arrival.⁵⁷

To all three – and one should repeat without valid evidence – Oppenheim and Wilhelm II play the key roles, in what is a cheap imitation of Snouck Hurgronje's accusation of the civilisational travesty of a German-Islamic alliance. McMeekin's conclusion ends:

Tellingly, the self-loathing 'my people are not my own' syndrome tends to strike not the poor, but instead the 'limousine liberals' like Baron Oppenheim, a man who literally spent a Jewish banking fortune formenting anti-Semitic jihad. Zionism, whatever its merits or demerits as a political programme, had emerged from the heart of German Judaeo-Christian culture at the time of its greatest flowering. Ungrateful recipients of all the best their flourishing empire had to offer, Max von Oppenheim and his foolish Emperor spent their

⁵⁴ Matthias Küntzel, *Jihad and Jew-Hatred: Islamism, Nazism and the Roots of 9/11* (New York: Telos Press, 2007); Matthias Küntzel, *Djihad und Judenhaß: über den neuen antijüdischen Krieg* (Freiburg: Ça Ira, 2002).

⁵⁵ McMeekin, *Berlin-Baghdad Express*; Jenkins, "Fischer's 'Programme for Revolution'," 414–16.

⁵⁶ Schwanitz, "Djihad 'Made in Germany'."

⁵⁷ Manjapra, "View from the Study of German-Indian Entanglement," 281.

civilisational inheritance promoting an atavistic version of pan-Islam devoted to the destruction of that civilisation and to the murder of the Christians and Jews who had forged it. It was a breathtaking error in judgement, and we are all living with the consequences today.

Already McKale had made Oppenheim Jewish, as this made the story more “enigmatic and controversial”. McMeekin’s unsettling reference to the “Jewish banking fortune” of the Catholic of Jewish descent Max von Oppenheim and his concluding the story with the Jew and “his emperor” destroying an invented Judaeo-Christian civilisational inheritance evokes a trope central to antisemitism, that of the court Jew. Or as Pfeffer noted on the “enlightened” antisemitism of the twenty-first century: “[A]nti-semitism does not have to be about hating all Jews, very often it is about hating just the wrong sort of Jews, be they Zionists, progressives or globalists. You just have to choose your conspiracy.”⁵⁸

Fortunately, more nuanced studies have come out during the last couple of decades. Most useful have been the studies by Landau on the history and politics of *Pan-Islam*, Qureshi on *Pan-Islam in British Indian Politics*, and Aksakal on the “Ottoman Origins of the 1914 Jihad”, drawing on British, Indian and Turkish sources, explaining the religious-political development of Pan-Islam in regional contexts and establishing the agency in and out of the war of politicians and clerics in the Ottoman Empire and India.⁵⁹ Müller’s analysis of Islam, jihad and German politics in the Maghreb during the World War One might use a revision or two some thirty years after its first publication, but is for its consultation of Arabic and French sources and expansion of the geographic scope an equally valuable addition.⁶⁰ Equally, Will provides a sober analysis of the mixed results the pursuit of asymmetric warfare delivered for Germany and its allies Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman empire.⁶¹ On the occasion of the centenary of the Great War, a number of edited volumes include significant case studies. In particular, Hanisch, Beşikçi and Hanioglu have cast more light on the workings of jihad between Germany and the Ottoman Empire during World

⁵⁸ McMeekin, *Berlin-Baghdad Express*, 366; McKale, “‘The Kaiser’s Spy’,” 199; Yair Mintzker, *The Many Deaths of Jew Süß. The Notorious Trial and Execution of an Eighteenth-Century Court Jew* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017); Anshel Pfeffer, “It’s not Anti-Semitism If You Just Hate the Bad Jews,” *Haaretz*, 9 February 2018.

⁵⁹ Landau, *Pan-Islam*; M. Naeem Qureshi, *Khilafat Movement*; Aksakal, “Ottoman Origins of Jihad”; Aksakal, “Ottoman Intellectuals on the Eve of the Great War.”

⁶⁰ Müller, *Ġihād und Deutsches Reich*.

⁶¹ Will, *Kein Griff nach der Weltmacht*.

War I.⁶² Allowing for a good contextualisation of the episode in the history of empires and Orientalism are a number of studies that tackle the matter of British sedition in the Islamicate world at the time, and post-war Pan-Islamic movements and application of the notion of jihad.⁶³

Hagen's study of "German Heralds of Holy" War analysed the engagement of professional German Orientalists through a lens of German guilt and Saidian *Orientalism* and comes to the somewhat contradictory conclusion that while "students of Islam, Arabic, and Turkish, in short, Orientalists were prominently involved", most professional Orientalists had nothing to do with the German jihad effort.⁶⁴ Looking at the German jihad episode from the perspective of the history of German Oriental studies, Marchand builds on Aksakal in recognising Ottoman agency more explicitly and sees German Orientalists collaborating in the war effort driven by a mixture of patriotism, opportunity, "utility" and cowardice, when failing to speak up against a policy they saw failing.⁶⁵ In response to Kramer's accusations against the field of Middle Eastern studies having failed to predict the Arab Spring, which he advised to remedy by re-establishing the standing of the "heroes of Orientalism", Jung analyses if such "heroes" as Goldziher, Nöldeke, Hartmann, Becker and Snouck Hurgronje were able to predict developments in the Ottoman Empire and the Islamicate world around 1914 and advise policymakers accordingly. Jung concludes that none of them, despite being at the height of their time, were able to predict anything and that "the suc-

62 M. Hanisch, "Anti-imperiale Befreiung"; Mehmet Beşikçi, "Domestic Aspects of Ottoman Jihad. The Role of Religious Motifs and Religious Agents in the Mobilization of the Ottoman Army," in *Jihad and Islam in World War I. Studies on the Ottoman Jihad on the Centenary of Snouck Hurgronje's "Holy War Made in Germany"*, Erik-Jan Zürcher (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2016), 95–115; M. Şükrü Hanioglu, "Ottoman Jihad or Jihads. The Ottoman Shi'i Jihad, the Successful One," in *Jihad and Islam in World War I. Studies on the Ottoman Jihad on the Centenary of Snouck Hurgronje's "Holy War Made in Germany"*, Erik-Jan Zürcher (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2016), 117–34; Erol Köroğlu, "Propaganda or Culture War. Jihad, Islam, and Nationalism in Turkish Literature During World War I," in *Jihad and Islam in World War I. Studies on the Ottoman Jihad on the Centenary of Snouck Hurgronje's "Holy War Made in Germany"*, Erik-Jan Zürcher (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2016), 135–51; Mehmet Beşikçi, *The Ottoman Mobilization of Manpower in the First World War. Between Voluntarism and Resistance* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

63 Slight, "British Understandings of the Sanussiyya Sufi Order's Jihad Against Egypt," *The Round Table* 103, no. 2 (2014): 233–42; Louise Pyne-Jones, "A Thoroughly Modern Caliphate: Could Legitimate Governance for the Middle East in the Aftermath of the First World War Have Been Found by Looking Within?" in *The First World War and Its Aftermath. The Shaping of the Modern Middle East*, T.G. Fraser (London: Gingko Library, 2015), 148–58.

64 Hagen, "German Heralds," 145–48.

65 Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 438–46.

cess and failure of academic policy advice depends less on the methodological and theoretical sophistication of a discipline or the emphatic knowledge of the area expert than on the historical context in which decision-making takes place.”⁶⁶ Fromkin’s work, cross-reading all major European diplomatic archives available at the time, has since been usefully complemented by Rogan’s recent work on *The Fall of the Ottomans*, re-centering the focus on the Middle East.⁶⁷

6 Sacralisation of War and Secularisation of Jihad

As the epistemic war over the meaning and significance of Islam, the caliphate, jihad and civilisation raged in European politics, culture and academia around 1914, there was a real proclamation of jihad made in Constantinople. In order to understand what that meant, this holy war, that Rosen saw as a chimera, it is useful to describe the forms or manifestations of jihad and their meaning at the time. The outbreak of the war brought an upswing of religious activity in nearly all countries involved in the war. When the Ottoman sultan-caliph had jihad pronounced in November 1914, soldiers entered into and sustained war with the relief religion offered and in the belief of higher meaning. The sacralisation of war and the utilisation of terms and symbols deemed sacred for the war effort in the Ottoman Empire were similar to German notions described in a publication titled *Unser Heiliger Krieg*, where the German Kyffhäuser dream of the reappearance of Barbarossa was believed to come into fruition with the Great War. “A great crusade” was also what British minister of munitions Lloyd George perceived, with fallen British soldiers at Ypres viewed as martyrs, and Edmund Allenby leading the British army into Jerusalem in December 1917 compared in *Punch* to Richard Lionheart. France instituted a “union sacrée” during the war and it had been common practice to elevate those dying in the pursuit of colonies to martyrs for the cause of civilisation.⁶⁸ As the war progressed and took on

⁶⁶ Jung, “Lessons for the Contemporary ‘Area Studies’,” 263–64.

⁶⁷ Fromkin, *Peace to End All Peace*; Rogan, *Fall of the Ottomans*.

⁶⁸ Niall Ferguson, *Der falsche Krieg. Der Erste Weltkrieg und das 20. Jahrhundert*, trans. Klaus Kochmann (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1999), 242–44; Ernst Borkowsky, *Unser Heiliger Krieg* (Weimar: Gustav Kiepenheuer, 1914); Malcolm Lambert, *Crusade and Jihad. Origins, History and Aftermath* (London: Profile Books, 2016), 244; Knut Görich, “Friedrich Barbarossa in den deutschen Erinnerungskulturen,” in *Friedrich Barbarossa in den nationalgeschichten Deutschlands und Ostmitteleuropas (19.–20. JH.)*, Knut Görich and Martin Wihoda (Cologne: Böhlau, 2017), 120–25; Jonathan Phillips, “The Call of the Crusades,” *History Today*, November 2009, 10–17; Amster, “Many Deaths of Mauchamp,” 409.

a dynamics of its own, this sacralisation, infused with national holiness and sacrifice, only intensified. Apocalyptic visions from religious canons were drawn on by warring parties across the board and adapted to the need for meaning that the brutality and hardship of the war caused.

Was the jihad the Ottomans declared any different and what did it mean? Stemming from the Arabic root letters jahada جهَد, meaning to endeavour, strive, labour, overcome and exhaust, the word jihad جهاد is the verbal noun of jahada's third form, meaning, according to Wehr, "fight, battle; jihad, holy war". Its adjective jihadi translates to "fighting, military", and the agent of the action, the mujahid, is a "fighter, freedom fighter; warrior; sergeant."⁶⁹ Aksakal outlined a conceptual history of the term jihad and related concepts for the Ottoman context, noting that "jihad was a prominent cultural concept, and usages of the term 'jihad' spilled into a wide variety of meanings." In the seventeenth century "most intimate marital moments devoted to 'the propagation of the species'" were described by the explorer Evilya Çelebi as a "greater jihad".⁷⁰ This leads to the important differentiation between greater (akbar) and lesser (asghar) jihad. Aksakal explains:

In Arabic the word *jihād* means 'striving'. The concept appears in the Quran without a definitive explanation and thus over the centuries it has been interpreted by scholars in various ways. *Jihād* has been defined as the internal, entirely peaceful struggle carried out by the individual believer striving to honour divine expectations *and*, at other times, as external, violent warfare waged against non-Muslims. The internal, peaceful form, moreover, has been referred to as 'greater jihad', whereas the external, violent form has been referred to as 'lesser jihad'.⁷¹

Plenty of wars and warlike situations were seen as constituting such a lesser jihad. The Crimean War against Russia was vernacularly known as a jihad and

⁶⁹ These entries of jihad into this global standard Arabic dictionary were recorded for the first time in late 1930s to early 1940s Germany. The dictionary was compiled as part of the war effort to better propagandise Hitler's *Mein Kampf* in the Arab world. In this context it would be interesting to trace back the circumstances of including the entry هتار in the second form coming out as tahatlara and translated as "to behave like, or imitate, Hitler". Hans Wehr and J. Milton Cowan, ed., *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic (Arabic-English)*, 4 (Urbana: Spoken Languages Services, 1994), 168–69, 1194; Ekkehard Ellinger, *Deutsche Orientalistik zur Zeit des Nationalsozialismus 1933–1945* (Edingen-Neckarhausen: Deux mondes, 2006), 192–93.

⁷⁰ Aksakal, "Ottoman Origins of Jihad," 187.

⁷¹ For early Shi'a Islam Viložny has noted that next to physical jihad, also the quietist adherence to the Shi'i faith was deemed enough struggle as Shi'ites were suffering persecution. Aksakal, "Ottoman Origins of Jihad," 188; Roy Viložny, *Constructing a Worldview. Al-Barqī's Role in the Making of Early Shi'i Faith* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 92–95.

in a time of crisis under Sultan Mahmud II in the early nineteenth century coins were struck as “jihadiye”. Overall, the period 1768–1919 saw at least six official jihad declarations, with the last one used to rally support by the avowedly secular Mustafa Kemal against the Greek army and the British-controlled Sultan in Constantinople in 1919. The Ottoman-Russian War of 1877, the Ottoman-Italian War of 1911 and the Balkan Wars were intentionally not accompanied by jihad declarations, to garner support from other European powers. European accusations of the 1894–6 Hamidian massacres of Armenians constituting jihad were also quickly denied by the Ottoman state.⁷² Just like Abdülhamid II had trifled with the exaggerated fears of the Europeans before, when the war broke out in Europe in 1914, Enver Pasha, aware of the Kaiser’s one dimensional understanding of jihad, used his Islam fancy to draw in the German leadership.

When the Ottomans joined the Central Powers with their declarations of jihad in November 1914, it was the uncharacteristic “cihad-ı ekber”, or greater jihad, that was proclaimed. Rather than betraying Young Turk and German governments’ ignorance of the concept, Aksakal argued that blurring lines between the personal and public action in times of rapid modernisation, anti-colonial mass movements and total war were reflected in the shifting of jihad from lesser to greater, amounting to what Kashani-Sabet calls in the case of Iran the “secularization of jihad”.⁷³ Consequently the concept of jihad was used by the Ottoman army during the war to legitimise its conscription system in multi-ethnic Anatolia and to unify Muslim peasants of Turkish, Kurdish and Circassian ethnicity. Leaflets expounding on the religious duty of jihad were dispersed and ‘ulema and Sufi orders advocated for conscription and accompanied soldiers into battle. But not all war propaganda – whether in the guise of jihad or otherwise – was blindly believed and religious figures were often accused of compromising their authority in playing “mouthpiece of the corrupt CUP government” as altercations between secular-bent modernisers and religious traditionalists from before the war were, if at all, put on halt for the duration international hostilities.⁷⁴

The Ottoman effort to mobilise support with the language of jihad and religious institutions also transcended today’s oft-invoked “sectarian lines”, when Sunni Ottoman war planners drew together with the Shi’ite Mujtahids of Najaf

⁷² Aksakal, “Ottoman Origins of Jihad,” 189–92.

⁷³ Aksakal, “Ottoman Origins of Jihad,” 188; Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet, *Frontier Fictions. Shaping the Iranian Nation, 1804–1946* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 144.

⁷⁴ Beşikçi, “Domestic Aspects of Ottoman Jihad,” 95–107; Köroğlu, “Propaganda or Culture War”; Erik-Jan Zürcher, “The Ides of April. A Fundamentalist Uprising in Istanbul in 1909?” in *State and Islam*, C. van Dijk and A.H. de Groot (Leiden: CNWS, 1996), 64–76.

and Kerbala in an effort to defend Basra in southern Mesopotamia against British invasion.⁷⁵ Independent from the Ottoman proclamation in November 1914, the Mujtahids had several days earlier declared jihad against the Entente, as British meddling in the clerical make-up of Najaf and Kerbala through the Indian Shi'ite funded Oudh Bequest had led to tensions. An alliance with the Ottomans inclusive of jihad offered a way of resistance, as the British "threatened the Islamic identity of the Muslim heartland and the religious centres of Shi'ism." The Ottoman authorities would subsequently come to facilitate the Shi'ite jihadi propaganda effort. Side-stepping the theological difficult matter of the caliphate, the jihad declarations only noted the Ottoman sultan and framed the struggle in anti-colonial terms.⁷⁶ Similarly, the Zaydi Shi'ite followers of the imam Yahya Muhammad Hamid ed-Din in Yemen also rallied to jihad on the side of the Ottoman empire.

The notion that the German mission of Fritz Klein to Iraq led to fatwas calling for jihad, which then spread to Iran inciting jihad there, should be corrected, as Kashani-Sabet has shown "jihad in defense of the lands of Islam" and in connection to the protection of the "Iranian homeland" had been sanctioned by the Shi'ite 'ulema in junction with notions of "Safavid revivalism" since the Russo-Persian wars in the early nineteenth century.⁷⁷ The German Klein was not needed to kindle jihad, if jihad was useful anyhow. In 1908 the widely influential modernist Calcutta-based Persian-language newspaper *Habl al-Matin* had declared "defensive jihad is obligatory... when infidels attack the country of Islam", tying up the concept of jihad with the necessity of procuring armaments and the study of Iran's geography.⁷⁸ In the aftermath of the Constitutional Revolution and the absolutist restoration, jihad was also pronounced as permissible against the despotism of the Qajar rulers. In 1914 Shi'ite 'ulema in Iran supported the proclamations coming out of Najaf and Kerbala, just like the Berlin-based and German-financed secular nationalist Iranian newspaper *Kaveh* called for a

75 Hanioglu, "Ottoman Shi'i Jihad."

76 The British also tried to get their own jihad going through Shi'a 'ulema, but failed "miserably", as Litvak notes. Meir Litvak, "A Failed Manipulation: The British, the Oudh Bequest and the Shi'i 'Ulamā' of Najaf and Karbalā'," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 27, no. 1 (2000): 82–84; Hanioglu, "Ottoman Shi'i Jihad," 119–21.

77 Kashani-Sabet, *Frontier Fictions*, 5, 32–33.

78 Věra Kubíčková, "Persian Literature of the 20th Century," in *History of Iranian Literature*, Jan Rypka, et al. (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1968), 365; Kashani-Sabet, *Frontier Fictions*, 144.

“great jihad” in 1916. Under the mettle of the Great War “jihad-i milli”, a national struggle, also gained currency in Iran.⁷⁹

As the case of the Shi’ite Mujtahids of Najaf and Kerbala influencing the southern Ottoman and the Persian theatres of war showed, religious sanctioning of war could have transnational effects. Jihad that was in line with the interests of the leaders and populations was a war worth fighting. But a series of Sunni Arabs, many nominally Ottoman subjects, did not follow the Ottoman call to jihad. Notably the Sunni-Arab tribes of Ibn Sa’ud and Hussein in the Arabian Peninsula had little interest in joining, as they had been quarrelling with the CUP government and saw their independence in the peninsula under threat due to Ottoman centralisation policies. British offers of independent statehood were more attractive. Others acted pragmatically. The reformist Salafiyya movement of Rashid Rida, though in theory sympathetic to Germany, worked with the British towards an Arab caliphate, because Rida anticipated that Britain would win the war, as it was “much cleverer in its ‘political cunning’” than Germany. The Wahabi ideologues, allied with Ibn Saud, on the other hand did not recognise the religious authority of the Ottoman caliph altogether and saw the Ottoman proclamation of jihad together with the Christian Germans as an inadmissible act of mixing the religious and the political, amounting to apostasy.⁸⁰

Just like their German allies, Ottoman war makers disseminated propaganda to India and Indonesia, and with German assistance also to Morocco, Libya and elsewhere. These efforts, just as Turkish attempts to ship weapons to Indian Muslims, failed largely in producing effective outcomes.⁸¹ This was not because jihad as a concept did not exist or had been abrogated. As noted above, the Murid wars

⁷⁹ [Taqizadeh] *Persien und der europäische Krieg*; Ghahari, *Intellektuelle Kreise*, 52–53; Kashani-Sabet, *Frontier Fictions*, 144–49; Epkenhans, *Iranische Moderne im Exil*, 141.

⁸⁰ Umar Ryad, “A German ‘Illusive Love’. Rashid Ridā’s Perceptions of the First World War in the Muslim World,” in *Jihad and Islam in World War I. Studies on the Ottoman Jihad on the Centenary of Snouck Hurgronje’s “Holy War Made in Germany”*, Erik-Jan Zürcher (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2016), 305–8; Umar Ryad, “Anti-Imperialism and the Pan-Islamic Movement,” in *Islam and the European Empires*, David Motadel (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 145–46; Joshua Teitelbaum, “The Man Who Would Be Caliph. Sharifian Propaganda in World War I,” in *Jihad and Islam in World War I. Studies on the Ottoman Jihad on the Centenary of Snouck Hurgronje’s “Holy War Made in Germany”*, Erik-Jan Zürcher (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2016), 279.

⁸¹ As Slight argues, the Senussiyya jihad against Britain in Egypt in 1915 was, despite widespread British fears of a Turco-German plot and the Senussi order’s leader accepting the Ottoman call to jihad, mostly a self-devised regional attack on British positions along the Libyan border. M. Naeem Qureshi, *Khilafat Movement*, 81, 478; Slight, “British Understandings of the Sanussiyya Sufi Order’s Jihad Against Egypt.”

in the Caucasus, Abdel Qadir's wars against the French in Algeria, rebellions against the Germans in Tanganyika and Cameroon, as well as the rebellion in 1857 and other flare-ups in India had been infused with religious rhetoric, legitimisation and often conceptualised as jihad. In India there was a history of anti-colonial jihad stretching back all the way to the Portuguese invasion of Kerala and Goa in southern India in the sixteenth century.⁸² Yet, though affinities to the last remaining Muslim polities were real and Muslim solidarity heartfelt, Ottoman ties with the larger Islamic world were not sustained by deep ties. Individual political and religious actors in faraway lands or at close range sensibly placed their own interests first, and deeply entrenched British and French colonial control and vigilance put the boot into any form of concerted anti-colonial jihad uprising. German involvement did not change this.

7 Orient Knowledge and the Expansion of German Foreign Affairs

Where did the Orientalist-diplomat Friedrich Rosen fit into these epistemic-political developments between Europe and the Orient? In his career, Rosen benefited tremendously from the development of Germany's increased interests in the East. His Persian teaching job with the SOS in Berlin was a direct outcome of German foreign affairs no longer being conceived in purely European terms. Well-versed in the relevant languages, his first positions in Beirut, Tehran and Baghdad allowed him to distinguish himself at a time of increasing German interests in the Middle East. The position of consul-general in Jerusalem Rosen landed after the Kaiser's visit to the Holy City in 1898 signalled the rising German interest in Palestine's Christian affairs. In the hierarchical bureaucracy of the *Auswärtiges Amt*, ascent from consular to diplomatic service was rare, and from a peripheral position outside Europe not only to the trade section, but to the political section even less likely. Rosen's appointment to the Orient desk of the political section of the *Auswärtiges Amt* in 1901 was a direct consequence of the intense increase of German economic and political interests in the Orient around the turn of the century. Despite his lack of noble pedigree – the absolute standard for German diplomats until the war – Rosen promised to be singularly

⁸² Rahman, *Interpretations of Jihad*; Shafeeq Hudavi, "Kerala to Pay Tributes to Shaikh Zainuddin Makhdoom," *TwoCircles*, 11 July 2015. Zaynuddin Makhdoom al-Ma'bari, *Tuhfat-al-Mujāhidīn. An Historical Work in the Arabic Language*, trans. S. Muhammad Husayn Nainar (Madras: University of Madras Press & G.S. Press, 1942).

well-equipped to grasp and handle the challenges of extra-European politics that German Weltpolitik required.⁸³ The stratification of noble diplomats placed in important capitals in Europe and burgher consular staff in peripheral posts across the world was later exemplified when the liberal *Berliner Tageblatt* applauded Rosen's appointment to Bucharest in 1910:

“Der bürgerliche Dr. Rosen erhält, nachdem man ihn bisher andauernd auf außereuropäischen Boden gelassen, endlich einmal auch einen europäischen Posten, und er ist gegenwärtig – und seit langer Zeit – *der einzige bürgerliche Gesandte*, der das Deutsche Reich bei einer europäischen Regierung vertritt.”⁸⁴

Since the departure of Otto von Bismarck and his son Herbert, the leading figure in the Auswärtiges Amt had been Friedrich von Holstein, the head of the political section. Rosen had come to the attention of Holstein with his reports from Tehran and Baghdad.⁸⁵ Placing Rosen on the Orient desk was a move to expand the knowledge base in the decision-making centre of the rapidly growing German network of foreign relations. The burgher Rosen, without income from land-holdings or extensive ties in Berlin high society, also promised to be sufficiently subservient to the grey eminence. Recounting in his autobiography his first impressions of working in the epicentre of German foreign policy, the forty-four year old Rosen was awe-struck by the proximity of the likes of Holstein and Bülow, and initially overwhelmed by the responsibility of the new task of directing policy, rather than taking orders and reporting on the ground. It was his “sober Westphalian spirit”, Rosen later claimed, that prevented him from toadying up too much. Initially under the wings of Holstein, Rosen admired his foreign policy acumen and felt “a high degree of gratitude for having brought me from obscurity into the first and most interesting section of the Auswärtiges Amt”.⁸⁶

Through the soirees of his colleague Karl Max von Lichnowsky and his wife's friend Marie von Bunsen and later also of chancellor Bülow, Rosen quickly developed relationships with other grandees of German political and cultural life in Berlin, such as Hebert von Bismarck, Victor Henkell Donnersmarck, Adolf

⁸³ Conze, *Das Auswärtige Amt*, 19–27; “The Education of German Consuls,” *Scientific American* 81, no. 8 (19 August 1899): 114–15.

⁸⁴ “The bourgeois Dr. Rosen receives, after he has been perpetually kept on extra-European ground, finally a European post, and he is currently – and since long – *the only bourgeois envoy*, who represents the German Reich at a European government.” “Deutschland,” *Berliner Tageblatt*, 12 July 1910.

⁸⁵ Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 256; Friedrich Rosen, “Hinterlassene Manuskripte I,” 43.

⁸⁶ Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 8–12; Marie von Bunsen, *Zeitgenossen die ich erlebte. 1900–1930* (Leipzig: Koehler & Amelang, 1932), 88.

von Harnack, Max Liebermann, and the diplomats Monts, Metternich and Kiderlen-Wächter. Rosen was with his Eastern philosophical knowledge and poetic streak a welcome addition to Berlin's soirees.⁸⁷ Next to Rosen's friends and acquaintances from the SOS and the wider field of Orientalistik, other circles Rosen moved in were continuations of Tehran's diplomatic scenery, with former British envoy to Iran Frank Lascelles serving as ambassador in Berlin (1895–1908) and Rosen striking up friendships with the Persian envoy Mahmud Khan Qajar Ehtesham es-Saltaneh and his deputy Hovhannes Khan Emad el-Vezareh.⁸⁸ Fostered by the Kaiser, who sought additional sources of information to keep power-holders, like his chancellor Bülow, in check, Rosen established his own position of influence in Berlin. With a more intimate understanding of the workings of European foreign relations, necessary to co-relate developments in the Orient to what decision-makers in St. Petersburg, London, Paris or Vienna were pursuing, Rosen improved on his credentials as "Orientkenner".⁸⁹ Acutely aware that many of his colleagues critically eyed him, the non-noble upstart from the Orient, this familiarisation was necessary not to be framed as a mere expert on the Orient. The wider exigencies of European concert politics were after all what mattered most, even as the extra-European world grew in importance in German foreign affairs.⁹⁰

The Orient portfolio in the Auswärtiges Amt stretched from the Balkans to the Ottoman Empire, the wider Middle East and East Africa. Apart from Pan-Slavism, central policy matters during Rosen's time in Berlin until 1905 were the Baghdad railway construction and Germany's growing ties with the Sublime Porte. The debate over the potency of (Pan-)Islam in bringing about an insurrection against French and British colonial administration in the event of war became more broadly discussed during Rosen's posting as envoy to Morocco from 1905 to 1910, and when subsequently serving as envoy to Romania (1910–1912) and Portugal (1912–1916). Removed from Berlin's central policymaking during the war in Lisbon and The Hague (1916–1921), Rosen was no longer intimately

⁸⁷ Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 27–28; Friedrich Rosen, "Hinterlassene Manuskripte I," 84; Petra Wilhelmy, *Der Berliner Salon im 19. Jahrhundert: 1780–1914* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1989), 326–27.

⁸⁸ Rosen and Rosen, *Elementa Persica*, VI; Friedrich Rosen to Arnold Wahnschaffe, 5 December 1917, 2538, Personalakten 12569, PA AA; Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 57–61; Rich, Fisher, and Frauendienst, *Holstein 1897–1909*, 459; Bourne, "Lascelles," 168.

⁸⁹ Bernhard von Bülow, Antrag des Auswärtigen Amtes auf Beförderung zum Rath zweiter Klasse, 24 August 1904, ASWPC; Clark, *Herrschaft des letzten deutschen Kaisers*, 169–74; Rich, Fisher, and Frauendienst, *Holstein 1897–1909*, 243.

⁹⁰ Osterhammel, *Verwandlung der Welt*, 716–17.

involved in German Orient politics, but continued to be recognised as one of the foremost German political authorities on the Orient.

While Rosen contributed to the improvement of German-Ottoman relations between 1901 and 1905, he was sceptical of the desirability of the Ottoman Empire as a German ally or of developing strategic interests in the Near East that were poised to cause conflicts with Great Britain or Russia. Much of this analysis was influenced by his experiences in Persia, where a similar situation had limited German room for manoeuvre. An additional source of background framing was his father's two volume history of the Ottoman Empire from the first half of the nineteenth century and supplemented by what he had learned in Ottoman Beirut, Jerusalem and Baghdad at the close of the century. Georg Rosen had seen the Ottoman Empire between a rock and hard place. European encroachments necessitated reforms, but the Tanzimat reforms and dabbling with liberalism in connection to the European revolutions of 1830 and 1848/9 kindled demands for further freedoms that were bound to create conflicts in the authoritarian-tribal empire that was directed and kept together by its harem politics.⁹¹

Rosen first uttered his disagreement with pursuing a closer alignment with the Ottoman Empire to Holstein and colleagues in the *Auswärtiges Amt* and in a memorandum to the Kaiser in 1904. His opposition to this cornerstone of German expansion, he believed, had him removed to Ethiopia and then sent as envoy to Morocco. In the following years, Rosen continued to council against what he perceived to be exaggerated expectations of what state and non-state actors in the Islamic world could deliver politically and at a war.⁹² A 1908 memorandum, which he sent from Morocco to the German chiefs of staff, advised that insurgencies in the Maghreb should not be counted on for strategic planning. In 1913, Rosen handed the Kaiser a memorandum about the state of the Islamic world, his reservations against a German Pan-Islam policy and an alliance with the Ottoman Empire. Attached to the memorandum was his recent re-publication of his father's translation of Rumi's *Masnawi*. However, a September 1914 telegram on the topic of insurrection in Iraq, that cited Rosen as source, found entry to Oppenheim's NfdO efforts to incite the Islamic World. In 1916, Rosen tried to convince Arthur Zimmermann to abort a Turco-German military venture in the Sinai and consider drawing on a more qualified pool of German diplomatic opinions. In early 1918 he dissuaded the Kaiser from appointing him to Tehran, after

⁹¹ Georg Rosen, *Vertilgung der Janitscharen bis zum Tode Machmuds II.*, vi, 129; Georg Rosen, *Thronbesteigung Abdulmedjids bis zum Pariser Tractat*, 112, 137; Leslie P. Peirce, *The Imperial Harem. Women and Sovereignty in the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

⁹² Müller-Werth, *Staatsmännisch denkender Diplomat*, 58–60.

the collapse of the Russian Empire led to renewed German war-optimism in the Middle East.

Seeing countries, cultures and societies, that he valued for their non-materialism, decline because of their lack of materialism, an analysis of these episodes in their spatial and temporal contexts shows how Rosen's thought was rooted foremost in hard geo-strategic Realpolitik. The violent fanaticism that was feared and hoped for in Europe, Rosen discarded as equivalent to the brawls that occurred between the youths of neighbouring villages in springtime Bavaria. Nevertheless, speaking to the larger sedition programme pursued by Germany at the outset of the war, Rosen contributed to German incitement in the Islamic world. He remained critical of what he perceived as Oriental adventures as the war went on, likely preventing his appointment as ambassador in Constantinople in 1916. By the winter of 1917/8 Rosen was in deferential opposition to the German military leadership and its unconditional war policy. Testing these episodes for the relevance of "expert" knowledge in political strategy and decision-making demonstrates that acceptance and integration of expertise depended on the position, ability and resources the knowledge bearer was able and willing to invest to make his or her input count. When "expert" knowledge stood in opposition to majority opinion and practice the cost rose. Regardless of its quality, knowledge that challenged hegemonic truth was blocked out, if contradictory to prevailing interests, established procedures and ingrained beliefs. The quality of Rosen's "Oriental knowledge" was not objective, comprehensive, flawless or due to his sympathies for "Oriental" countries framed in terms of equity or solidarity, but due to years of often intimate experiences of various lands, cultures and peoples and a thorough understanding of diplomacy and international politics multi-layered, adaptable and critical. Often in a minority of one, the burgher Rosen could neither before nor during the war comprehensively impress his knowledge on German Orient politics.

7.1 A Railway Trip to Konya and a Memorandum for the Kaiser in 1904

At the time of Rosen's appointment to the Orient desk of the Auswärtiges Amt, German negotiations with the British and Ottomans over the Ottoman railway were ongoing, as the financial and political set up for the extension of the railway system from its end point at Konya to Baghdad and down to the Persian Gulf were hashed out. In his memoirs, Rosen recalls that upon arrival in Berlin in 1901, he was surprised by the "active interest that was shown to all Orient questions", which would eventually lead him "onto the way of ever more growing scepticism" as he lost trust in the wisdom of the decisions made in pursuing

an assertive policy in the Ottoman Empire. His work on the Orient desk had Rosen perceive the German foreign policy towards the Ottoman Empire and the Baghdad railway project to be formatively directed by the German ambassador to Constantinople Adolf Marschall von Biberstein. Marschall had been state secretary of the *Auswärtiges Amt* under chancellors Caprivi and Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst and was removed to Constantinople amid the rise of Bülow and Wilhelm's more active interference in foreign policy. Rosen saw Marschall not lacking in ambition or ability. The former secretary of state wanted to make something out of his position in Constantinople. The railway became a political affair that outgrew its prior economic significance, and Marschall managed "through his exquisite and gripping reports" to awaken Wilhelm's interest in the Islamic world to flank support for his actions in the Ottoman empire. In this context, Rosen also thought that Marschall had talked up the importance of the railway concession to justify the considerable cost of the trip of Wilhelm and his entourage to Constantinople, Jerusalem and Damascus in 1898.⁹³

Rosen himself took the position that a substantive German participation in the railway construction had to depend on two main factors: German economy and businesses should profit and German engagement should not lead to political setbacks in relations with Britain. As he saw neither guaranteed, he doubted the benefits accruing to Germany. Already when he first learnt of the German railway plans in Baghdad in 1898, Rosen had voiced reservations in letters to his brother Hareth, as he feared the disruption the railway would bring to the Fertile Crescent. Six years later, Rosen noted that neither the Deutsche Bank nor the trade political section of the *Auswärtiges Amt* saw much benefit of the railway, and that moreover a report based on a field study by the diplomat Wilhelm Stemrich was rather pessimistic.⁹⁴

After first voicing his scepticism to colleagues, who shrugged their shoulders, and then to Holstein, who did not want to go into the matter, Rosen wrote up a lengthy report for the Kaiser in the spring of 1904. In it, Rosen argued that "Turkey was not in a situation to disentangle itself from its current situation without further substantial loss to its sovereignty", that the "efficacy of the Turkish army had declined substantially in previous years" in both its European and Asian provinces and that consular reports from Syria painted a picture of "political and economic misery". Turkish nationalism, he continued, would not lead to development, and was problematic as Turks were only one part of the Ottoman

⁹³ Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 65–66.

⁹⁴ Friedrich Rosen, 1898, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte II*, 7 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 122–130; Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 66–67.

population. The territorial “crumbling away” had been a long process in the nineteenth century and was not going to “suddenly stop” now. For Germany, this meant that as Russia was pushing south, a German railway engagement would not sufficiently help the Ottoman Empire. The case of Persia could be taken as an example, where Russia had been creating concession and tariff regimes that excluded others from trade and actively prevented economic development. On the contrary, Russian opposition to German railway construction was assured, as it hindered its plans to expand southwards and would only prompt Russia to accelerate its activities to destabilise the Ottoman Empire. Rosen advised the Kaiser that he should keep this in mind when considering “Orientpolitik” and that “under all circumstances conflicts with the Great Powers” had to be avoided.⁹⁵ With the memorandum only preserved as a draft in Rosen’s personal collection, it is not clear when exactly the memorandum was submitted to the Kaiser and if and how Rosen’s suggestions were received. A date some time before the fall of 1904 is likely.

Rosen and his family spent the summers travelling in the Balkans and Asia Minor to learn more about the countries that fell within Rosen’s professional portfolio. In the summer of 1904 Rosen visited the Ottoman Empire. Accompanied by Nina, Rosen travelled in a luxury train along the already existing railway tracks to Konya. Rosen observed that “the development of the country was admirable where ever the railway had reached. It was undeniable that the railway was for Turkey and its inhabitants a great blessing... prosperity, security and reconciliation replaced poverty, banditry and national conflicts.”⁹⁶ In Constantinople, talks with ambassador Marschall demonstrated further positive effects the railway had on the efficiency of the Ottoman tax system and the economic development, renewing bonds of affinity between ruler and ruled. But Rosen was not convinced of the necessity of German involvement. Hans von Wangenheim, Marschall’s second at the time, insinuated in a conversation with Rosen that economic goals were determinative, but that “the German government would in consequence become so widely engaged, that it was in the end still amounting to pursuing territorial ambitions.” As the German diplomat Wipert von Blücher would later remark, the politics of imperialist expansion “began with penetration pacifique, went over to occupation militaire and finally ended in annexation.”⁹⁷ At a time when France and Great Britain had come to an arrangement over preponderances of influence across Africa that culminated in the Entente Cordiale,

⁹⁵ Friedrich Rosen, Report for Wilhelm II, January 1904, draft, A 1286, A 1228, ASWPC.

⁹⁶ Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 72.

⁹⁷ Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 70; Winzen, *Büllo*, 221–24; Blücher, *Zeitenwende*, 14.



Fig. 7.1. Friedrich Rosen with Kaiser Wilhelm II on the *Hohenzollern* during a cruise of the Mediterranean in the spring of 1904.

this dynamics of expansion had Rosen fear that a continuation of pursuing a German forward position in the Ottoman Empire and Marschall's ambition to create a *fait accompli* by rapidly pushing the railway construction to Baghdad, without Germany being able to back up its involvement with military means, would lead Germany into conflict with England and Russia without the Ottomans being able to perform or Germany likely to win: "What did it help us in the end, when the peoples 'far deep in Turkey' came to prosperity and reputation, if we ourselves became ever more deeply involved in political difficulties", Rosen noted in his memoirs.⁹⁸

While in Konya, Rosen visited the tomb of Jalal ed-Din Rumi, the Sufi mystic, whose *Masnawi* he had studied. Rumi had settled down in Konya in the early

⁹⁸ Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 73.

thirteenth century, where he studied with the mystic Shams-e Tabrizi and became an influential derwish master. The followers of Rumi founded the Mevlevi order, with the tomb in Konya a central point of reverence and pilgrimage. Conversing with the dervishes guarding the tomb of their order's founder, Rosen was startled to find that only one understood Persian, the language in which Rumi's *Masnavi* was written. All others knew a few verses of Rumi by heart but "cared little for their meaning. The entire zikr (liturgical service) including the *saṁa'* (enraptured bowing) had become empty and incomprehensible formula to them." In contrast to the equally Rumi-inspired and intellectually flourishing modernist Safi 'Ali Shahiyya that he had been part of in Tehran, he was shocked to find at Rumi's place of burial no living practice of Sufi beliefs. So shocked, that in his 1913 introduction to the republication of his father's *Mesnevi* translation, Rosen found in mysticism the reason for the stand-still and decay of countries "ruled by mysticism", as "who has reached closeness to God, has thus found all that is valuable to know and no longer needs to search."⁹⁹

Upon Rosen's return to Berlin he told Holstein of his impressions and reservations against Germany's Baghdad railway politics, provoking "Holstein's always lively distrust."¹⁰⁰ Rosen and Holstein had estranged already before and at the time Holstein felt mistreated by the Kaiser and Bülow, whom he accused of acting towards him, a senior official, as if he was just another junior clerk like Rosen. Rosen's geo-political considerations and criticism did not improve his standing, as Holstein and Bülow began to pursue policies of geo-strategic wedging between Britain and Russia in the Ottoman Empire and France and Britain in Morocco to break up the Entente Cordiale.¹⁰¹ Müller-Werth came to the conclusion that Rosen's appointment to Ethiopia in early 1905 was based on recognition of his abilities and Orientalist knowledge. Rosen speculated that Holstein wanted to remove him, so that he would not contradict policy decisions in the *Auswärtiges Amt* on Morocco: "Because if one wants to act stupidly, one needs to keep away experts and especially people with their own opinions." With first German overtures from Bülow to the Moroccan Sultan on 2 January

⁹⁹ Georg Rosen and Friedrich Rosen, *Mesnevi*, 24–25.

¹⁰⁰ Müller-Werth, *Ein staatsmännisch denkender Diplomat*, 59; Friedrich Rosen, 1926, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte I*, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 87.

¹⁰¹ Rich, Fisher, and Frauendienst, *Holstein 1897–1909*, 275; Clark, *Herrschaft des letzten deutschen Kaisers*, 193; Rose, *Außenpolitik des Wilhelminischen Kaiserreichs*, 66; Winzen, *Ende der Kaiserherrlichkeit*, 319–24.

1905, shortly after Rosen's departure for Ethiopia, Rosen's suspicion was not unfounded.¹⁰²

Rosen's scepticism towards the developing German Orient policy was partially driven by his knowledge of the regions and partially by international power-dynamics, but as German interests increased due to economic expansion and colonialist agitation and brought the country into conflict with entrenched interests of other European powers, neither Rosen's expertise nor his criticism was required for a German Orient policy that was conducted on European terms of engagement and paid little attention to the political and societal conditions of Oriental countries. Rather than bringing about more harmonious relations with Russia and Britain over the Ottoman Empire, through his interventions in the *Auswärtiges Amt* and with the Kaiser Rosen found himself far from the action in Ethiopia and then sent away from Berlin to deal with the effects of this German Orient policy in Morocco.

7.2 "The Superiority of Our Weapons". Views from Tangier, 1905–1910

Upon returning to Berlin from Ethiopia in May 1905, Rosen was, as he claimed, kept away from the Morocco files by Holstein. During a vacation with the Bülowes in Norderney in July the topic of Germany's Morocco policy was also not broached. Shortly after, Rosen was sent to Paris on Holstein's behest as special negotiator to find a solution to the Morocco crisis with the French negotiator Paul Révoil, which led into the preparation of the Algericas conference. The discussions in Paris were contentious. The French side wanted to clarify policing in Morocco before the conference and Rosen wanted to restrict French policing to the area along the Algerian border and a commitment to not push for general policing rights in Morocco. Rosen overstepped his instructions with these positions and was called to order by Wilhelm II, who was sick of the "Gezänk" (bickering) and wanted Rosen to be "conciliatory". Negotiations were complicated by German ambassador Radolin to Paris negotiating with the French side parallel to Rosen's talks.¹⁰³ Rosen did not attend the conference in early 1906, which rear-

102 Müller-Werth, *Staatsmännisch denkender Diplomat*, 60; Burke III, *Prelude to Protectorate*, 81.

103 Mai, *Marokko-Deutsche*, 302–3; Whyte, *Letter of von Bülow*, 179; von Bülow, *Marokko-Krise bis zum Abschied*, 168–69; Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 156–226; Rich, Fisher, and Frauendienst, *Holstein 1897–1909*, 315–50.

ranged Morocco's police, customs and established a central bank and resulted in a diplomatic defeat for Germany.¹⁰⁴

Rosen arrived in Tangier in October 1905, where he would remain with long holiday interruptions until the spring of 1910. The landing of the Kaiser in Morocco in March 1905 had awoken French suspicions of German colonial interest and provoked a strengthening of the Franco-British Entente, rather than its coming apart. Instead of finding allies in Italy, Russia, the United States and Britain in an "open door" economic policy amidst French efforts to create a protectorate, the Algeciras conference although guaranteeing Moroccan independence demonstrated Germany's international isolation. As neither Bülow, Holstein or the Kaiser were willing to credibly threaten military action against France to guarantee equal access for all European economic interests and Moroccan political sovereignty, Germany's position in Morocco itself was weakened. Without any alternatives, the government of Moroccan Sultan Mulai 'Abd al-'Aziz still saw in Germany's support its best chance for survival.¹⁰⁵

Initially, Rosen gained a number of economic concessions for German companies, replaced a retired German advisor with a former German officer and took advantage of the Sultan consulting with the Germans on political developments.¹⁰⁶ In the coming years, Rosen witnessed Franco-Spanish territorial expansion in Morocco, and amid French military preponderance the taking over of Moroccan state finances and internal security. Whenever France encountered Moroccan opposition Rosen stood accused in the French and British press of instigating rebellions.¹⁰⁷ His reputation from the contentious negotiations with Révoil preceding him, Rosen was not very popular with the French. By the fall of 1906, Rosen repeatedly reported back to Berlin that a proper policy was missing. Instead of fighting "rear-guard actions" against further French encroachments, he suggested that Germany should enter into negotiations with France for an "equivalent". Options were French support over the Baghdad railway or colonial swaps in Africa.¹⁰⁸ Rosen did not receive an answer from Berlin. Germany wanted to keep France busy in Morocco, not more.

From a French perspective, however, things looked differently; breaking German influence at court of the Moroccan Sultan was the main goal. By May 1907,

104 Frederick V. Parsons, *The Origins of the Morocco Question, 1880–1900* (London: Duckworth, 1976), 525–31.

105 Schöllgen, *Deutsche Außenpolitik*, 91–94.

106 Burke III, *Prelude to Protectorate*, 84.

107 Mai, *Marokko-Deutsche*, 319, 438.

108 Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 21 December 1906, A 249, R 15508, PA AA; Mai, *Marokko-Deutsche*, 320.

Rosen advised that French penetration of Morocco was accelerating and Germany continued to be in a bind without any other country taking the side of the Sultan and Morocco too weak to defend itself. He observed:

Die einzigen, denen der Selbsterhaltungstrieb gebietet, sich gegen die französischen Übergriffe zu wehren, sind die Marokkaner selbst. Diese klammern sich wie ein Ertrinkender an die deutsche Hilfe... Dieses Festhalten der Marokkaner an dem deutschen Freunde ist zwar durchaus verständlich und bedingt auch erhebliche Vorteile für uns, aber es hat auch seine... nicht unbedenkliche Seite. Einmal ist es nicht sehr bequem, in jeder Lage und vor jeder Entscheidung um Rat gefragt zu werden, denn damit übernimmt der Ratgeber die Verantwortung für die Folgen seines Rates. Und welchen Rat soll die deutsche Politik dem Machsen erteilen, da, wo es sich um augenscheinliche Vergewaltigung durch den übermächtigen Nachbarn handelt? Wie aber der deutsche Rat im einzelnen auch ausfallen oder wirken mag, eins ist sicher: In Frankreich wird er immer mißfällig bemerkt werden.¹⁰⁹

Rosen noted that the Sultan was in such dire financial straits that he was selling off vast parts of his properties, but was bound to succumb to French loan terms and allow far-reaching concessions.

Relations with France and Germany's role in Morocco itself were, however, not the only considerations driving German policy. The sceptre of Islam and the Ottoman caliphate had by the middle of the decade found its way into Germany's Weltpolitik strategy. In June 1907, Bülow wrote to Wilhelm II that giving up Morocco to France would endanger Germany's "position in the Islamic world". Bülow went on to explain: "Es handelt sich für uns ja nicht um Marokko, sondern vielmehr um die Rückwirkung, die ein solches Handelsgeschäft auf den Sultan in Konstantinopel und auf den gesamten Mohamedanismus zum Schaden der deutschen Weltstellung ausüben würde."¹¹⁰

109 "The only ones dictated by their survival instinct to resist French attacks are the Moroccans themselves. Like a drowning man they cling to German help... this Moroccan clutching onto the German friend is admittedly understandable and also induces considerable advantages for us, but it also has its... not harmless side. For one, it is not convenient to be asked for advice in every situation and before every decision, because thereby the advisor takes on the responsibility for the consequences of the advice. And which advice should German politics give to the court of the Sultan, there, where it concerns obvious rape by the overpowering neighbour? No matter how the German advice turns out in detail, one thing is sure: In France it will always be noticed with displeasure." Friedrich Rosen to Bernhard von Bülow, 21 May 1907, A 137, R 15508, PA AA.

110 "It is not a matter of Morocco for us, but rather of the repercussions that such a commercial transaction would have on the Sultan in Constantinople and on all Mohammedanism to the detriment of Germany's position in the world". In his 1914 memoirs, Bülow doubled down: "We should have completely destroyed our credit in the Mahomedan world, if so soon after these declarations we had sold Morocco to the French." In his 1930 memoirs Bülow then wrote that already in 1898 it had been clear that "not much could be expected from the

Rosen recounted a conversation with Bülow in a visit to Norderney on his way back from the Orientalist congress in Copenhagen in the fall of 1908 in which Bülow stated that in the case of French involvement in a European war the North African Arabs would rise up against French rule. Rosen replied that such a general uprising should not be considered and that no thought should be invested in such possibilities in German foreign policy. When Bülow was not convinced, Rosen sent him a detailed report to substantiate his argument from Tangier. In it he argued that a Moroccan uprising against France in case of a war was unlikely, and that the French would moreover be able to muster troops from Morocco for a European war sooner than generally expected. Bülow's consultations with the German military, however, contradicted Rosen's analysis.¹¹¹

In no small part sparked by the 1905 Morocco Crisis that made a war look more likely, a debate was ongoing between mainland France and its colonies over the employment of North African and West African troops in a potential European war. In turn the question arose in Germany's military and public whether French conscription from the colonies, and in particular the conscription of the for their bravery renown Moroccans, would outweigh Germany's demographic advantage.¹¹² A report issued by the chief of staff Helmuth von Moltke, titled "African troops as reinforcement of the French armed forces" in January 1910 closed:

"In einem deutsch-französischen Kriege könnte Frankreich marokkanische Truppen auf europäischem Boden sicher verwenden. Dabei kann aber nur ein Einsatz von Massen ins Gewicht fallen. Die ganze Frage ist aber noch in weite Ferne gerückt, da... die Vorbedingungen für eine derartige Aufstellung marokkanischer Truppenteile die Besitzergreifung Marokkos durch Frankreich wäre".

The document was shared with the Auswärtiges Amt for comment, a task delegated to Rosen in Morocco.¹¹³

green flag" of the Ottomans. von Bülow, *Imperial Germany*, 100; Bernhard von Bülow, *Denkwürdigkeiten. Vom Staatssekretariat bis zur Marokko-Krise*, Franz von Stockhammern (Berlin: Ullstein, 1930), 252–53; Mai, *Marokko-Deutsche*, 481.

111 Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 356.

112 Koller, *Verwendung von Kolonialtruppen in Europa*, 66–76.

113 "In a German-French war France could surely employ Moroccan troops on European ground. But only a deployment of masses can carry weight. The whole question is moved into the far distance though, as the prerequisite for such a deployment of Moroccan troop elements would be the occupation of Morocco by France." Johannes Lepsius, Albrecht Mendelssohn Bartholdy, and Friedrich Thimme, *Die zweite Marokkokrise 1911*, Die Große Politik der Euro-

Rosen wrote a lengthy report in response. In the meantime he had witnessed the occupation of Oujda on the Algerian border in response to the mob-killing of French doctor and agent Émile Mauchamp in the spring of 1907, the subjugation of the Berber Béni-Snassen (Ayt Iznassen) tribe in Northern Morocco around the same time, the military clamp down on an insurrection near Casablanca in the fall of 1907 led by rival to the throne and later successor Mulay Abdel Hafid backed by a number of tribes from the Chaouia valley, and the Spanish occupation of the Rif mountain range in 1909. There was no sustained opposition, nationalist or religious uprisings or Muslim aid in support of besieged fellow Moroccans, and Rosen came to the conclusion that there was nothing stopping the French from slowly but surely taking over the entire country.¹¹⁴

Furthermore, France had already in 1908 begun to train “Goumier Marocains”, auxiliary troops, and the Spanish began integrating Kabyle Berber troops into their own forces in 1909. In case of a European war the French dependant Moroccan Sultan would be forced into the “fiction of an alliance” to deliver more troops, Rosen opined in his report to the new chancellor Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg. Unlikely revolts could be avoided by moving Moroccan troops to Algeria and Algerian troops to Morocco. Algerian troops had after all already been part of the forces quelling Moroccan opposition.¹¹⁵ Quoting an unidentified Frenchman, Rosen characterised the position of French power in Morocco as “Ils ont reconnu la supériorité de nos armes”.¹¹⁶ Rosen’s categorical ruling out the prospect of rebellions hindering the French to draw on Moroccan troops is also noteworthy in the context of the 1907 Chaouia uprising led by Mulay Hafid being phrased in terms of jihad against Sultan ‘Abd al-‘Aziz and for-

päischen Kabinette 1871–1914. (Berlin: Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft für Politik und Geschichte, 1927), 52.

114 Friedrich Rosen to AA, 26 February 1909 564, Personalakten 12573, PA AA; Venier, “Rebellions in Eastern Morocco,” 60–64; Amster, “Many Deaths of Mauchamp,” 409; Katz, *Murder in Marrakesh*; Mai, *Marokko-Deutsche*, 325; Grasset, *A travers la Chaouïa*, 6; Segonds, *La Chaouïa et sa pacification. Étude sommaire de l’action française dans la région de Casablanca jusqu’au 1er Janvier 1909* (Paris: Charles-Lavauzelle, 1909), 27–35; Burke III, “Siba de la Chaouia,” 162; Lucien Louis Boullé, *La France et les Beni Snassen. Campagne du Général Lyautey* (Paris: Charles-Lavauzelle, 1909).

115 Driss Maghraoui, “Moroccan Colonial Soldiers: Between Selective Memory and Collective Memory,” *Arab Studies Quarterly* 20, no. 2 (Spring 1998): 21–41; Geoffrey Jensen, “The Peculiarities of ‘Spanish Morocco’: Imperial Ideology and Economic Development,” *Mediterranean Historical Review* 20, no. 1 (June 2005): 92; Goums mixtes Marocains; Lepsius, Mendelssohn Bartholdy, and Thimme, *Die zweite Marokkokrise*, 53–54; Grasset, *A travers la Chaouïa*, 12; Segonds, *La Chaouïa et Sa Pacification*, 38.

116 “They have recognised the superiority of our weapons”. Lepsius, Mendelssohn Bartholdy, and Thimme, *Die zweite Marokkokrise*, 53.

eign encroachments.¹¹⁷ The buzz that the declaration of jihad had created in Morocco and reached Germany through the press did not warrant Rosen's notice. German Consul to Fez Philip Vassel, on whose input Rosen relied heavily in his reporting to Berlin, considered the "chatter" of holy war as an expression of "the feeling of impotence" and Rosen shared Vassel's assessment. In his view, Mulay Hafid led a "splintered, multifarious opposition" that he was bound to fail in its quest to create a Moroccan state free of foreign interference.¹¹⁸

How widely Rosen's report was shared in Berlin is unclear. During the Great War a comparatively small contingent of some 30,000 troops from Morocco saw action in Europe. As French troops pulled out of the country to reinforce positions along the German front, there were no major insurrections or rebellions, and the land was largely controlled by the "Goums", the locally recruited Moroccan forces.¹¹⁹ When Rosen left the Moroccan stage in the spring of 1910, these strategic considerations were not a matter of policy yet, but a question of contingency planning. Perceiving of alternating French accusations of Moroccan chaos and religious fanaticism as propaganda – also due to Germany's siding with the Moroccans – like most German diplomats in Morocco, Rosen was under no illusion that French superior force, amid an arms embargo following Algeciras, would leave little potential for concerted uprisings through religion or patriotism in a future war.

After Rosen's repeated requests to be relocated from Morocco were heeded in May 1910 with an appointment as envoy to Bucharest, Rosen found himself no longer intimately involved in Orient affairs. But his reputation as Orient expert continued to accompany him. Although Romania had been part of Rosen's Orient portfolio at Wilhelmstraße, he recommended that the *Auswärtiges Amt* should refrain from formulating a press statement on the reason for his posting to the Romanian court as

dass ich 'als spezieller Kenner des Orients' nach dem auf seine europäische Herkunft und Kultur stolzen Rumänien versetzt sei, dort sowohl bei Hofe wie öffentlicher Meinung verstimmen würde. Rumänische leitenden Kreisen wird es kaum schmeicheln, dass ihr Land mit orientalischen Posten, wie ich sie bekleidet habe (Beirut, Teheran, Bagdad, Jerusalem, Abessinien) auf gleiche Stufe gestellt wird.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ Burke III, "Siba de la Chaouia," 162.

¹¹⁸ Mai, *Marokko-Deutsche*, 165, 420; Mai, *Kurzbiographien*, 113.

¹¹⁹ Koller, *Verwendung von Kolonialtruppen in Europa*, 93, 147; *Goums mixtes Marocains*, 1.

¹²⁰ "that I 'as a special expert on the Orient' am transferred to a Romania that is proud of its European origin and culture, would there surely at court and in public opinion cause annoyance. Leading Romanian circles will hardly be flattered that their country is put on a level with the

Romanian politics circled around German exploitation of petroleum, Russian interests in the Balkans, and a Francophile Romanian bourgeoisie in contrast to a German royal house. In Lisbon, where he served from 1912 until the German declaration of war in 1916, Rosen worked on coming to an accord with the British over the break-up of Portuguese colonies in Central Africa if Portuguese bankruptcy would force the country to liquidate its territorial possessions.¹²¹

7.3 A Memorandum on Muslim States for the Kaiser in 1913

Rosen left the “Orient”, but it did not leave him. On a home visit to Berlin from Lisbon with his wife in May 1913 the topic of a German alliance with the Ottoman Empire, linked notions of friendship with the Muslim world and the usage of jihad in the event of a war were very much alive. Rosen and his wife met Kaiser Wilhelm in the Neues Palais in Potsdam for lunch. This was not an unusual encounter. Rosen and Nina took meals with Wilhelm and Auguste Viktoria on a number of occasions. The Kaiser had taken a liking to the man, who wrote letters to his wife in Persian and could answer the Kaiser’s question if the word *Albatross* was really from the Arabic *Al-Butrus*; the bird like *Petrus* “walking on water”.¹²²

More to the point than the chit-chat were the conversations between Rosen and the Kaiser, in which Rosen tried to emphasise that Britain was in a position of supreme power nearly everywhere and that an alliance with Muslim states would not break British preponderance.¹²³ According to Rosen’s memoirs, in one of those visits to the Neues Palais in June 1907 the Kaiser pulled Rosen into an empty room to ask him if he did not think an alliance with the Ottomans to be in order. Rosen argued that the contrary was the case and that in the event of war such an alliance would come about anyhow, German motions in this di-

Oriental posts that I have filled.” Friedrich Rosen to Botho von Weedel, 9 July 1910, 2241, Personalakten 12573, PA AA.

121 “Gesandtenwechsel,” *Die Post*, 13 June 1912; Herold, “Orientalista, diplomata e político,” 12–14; Friedrich Rosen, *Bukarest. Lissabon*.

122 This is not the correct etymology of the word *Albatross*, which is an amalgamation of the Latin “*albus*” (white) and Spanish “*alcatraz*” (seabird). Friedrich Rosen, 1926, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte I*, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 63–71; August Eulenburg to Bernhard von Bülow, 20 October 1910, 3231, Personalakten 12573, PA AA; Nina Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 1916, 362 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; A.F. Gotch, *Latin Names Explained: A Guide to the Scientific Classification of Reptiles, Birds & Mammals* (New York: Facts on File, 1995), 190.

123 Friedrich Rosen, “*Hinterlassene Manuskripte I*,” 92–94; von Bülow, *Weltkrieg und Zusammenbruch*, 62–63.

rection would automatically provoke closer affiliation between Germany's adversaries who were interested in the break up of the Ottoman Empire. Rosen recounted in his memoirs: "Ich habe es damals dem Kaiser hoch angerechnet, daß er meinen Ausführungen Aufmerksamkeit und volle Beachtung schenkte, obwohl sie einer mir bekannten Lieblingsidee von ihm zuwiderliefen."¹²⁴ In a similar semi-social conversation in 1913, Rosen recounted that the Kaiser had told him of having just been informed by Bernhard Moritz, a lecturer at the SOS and former head of the Khedival library in Cairo, that the Ottoman Sultan was not the rightful bearer of the name caliph, as this was reserved for a descendant of the prophet, which the sultan was not. Rosen concurred. On the way out, the Kaiser exclaimed "von der Goltz and Marschall have been thoroughly mistaken. Now their entire beautiful construction collapsed!" According to Rosen, this was followed by the Kaiser indicating that German policy should shift to territorial gains in case of an Ottoman break up.¹²⁵

On the following day Rosen submitted a three-page memorandum on the "inner reasons for the disintegration of the Islamic states" to the Kaiser.¹²⁶ The memorandum was – once again – intended to dissuade German politics from betting its horses on an alliance with the Ottoman Empire. In the event of a war, Rosen outlined, the Sublime Porte would be forced into an alliance with Germany. As he had done nine years before, Rosen opined that Germany should rather "hope that the [process of disintegration of Turkey] can at least be prevented for as long as the imminent German-English rapprochement needed to solidify and produce tangible fruits in other fields." Germany's future should be sought in an accommodation with mighty Britain, not against it with the help of crumbling Muslim states. In order to arrive at this conclusion of "hope" for a European rapprochement, Rosen did not provide a policy of action for the Ottoman Empire, but a reading of the Muslim world that was desolate. In part reiterating his 1904 memo, the Ottoman Empire had shrunk from Europe and Africa, and it was to be expected that it could not hold its Asian territories much longer. Morocco was finished as an independent entity. Persia, a semi-autonomous rump state sandwiched between Russian and British "zones of influence", was in a similar quagmire. Rosen explained:

¹²⁴ "At the time I gave great credit to the Kaiser for paying attention and full recognition to my explanations, even though they ran counter to his known pet idea." Friedrich Rosen, *Bukarest. Lissabon*, 197.

¹²⁵ Lemke, "Globaler Krieg: Colmar von der Goltz"; Friedrich Rosen, *Bukarest. Lissabon*, 197–98; Friedrich Rosen, 1926, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte I*, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 84; Fuhrmann, "German Colonial Desire," 142–44.

¹²⁶ Rudolf von Valentini to Friedrich Rosen, 24 May 1913, 8, PA AA.

Nirgends ist auch eine erfolgreiche Anstrengung gemacht worden, durch Anpassung an die Erfordernisse unserer Zeit die staatliche und gesellschaftliche Organisation zu verjüngen, wie dies in Japan geschehen ist. Das Jungtürkentum war eine dem Wesen des Islam so fremde Bewegung, dass sein Misserfolg ein unausbleiblicher war. Der Niedergang der muh[ammedanischen] Staaten ist vielmehr ein allgemeiner und der schließliche Untergang nur eine Frage der Zeit. Endlich ist es auch nichts Ernstes mit einer sogenannten panislamischen Bewegung oder gar mit dem sogenannten "heiligen Krieg", von dem unsere Zeitungen von Zeit zu Zeit ein Schreckbild entwerfen. Alle muhammedanischen Gemeinwesen scheinen vielmehr einem unerbitterlichen Naturgesetz zu unterliegen, daß sie mit oder ohne Reform – und meist gerade durch die Reform – dem unaufhaltsamen Untergange entgegenführt.¹²⁷

In order to explain why the "holy war" was no serious matter, Rosen discussed the idea of the caliphate. "Inseparably" linked to the principle of religious legitimacy, that is to the descendants of 'Ali and Fatima (the daughter of prophet Mohammed), Rosen had the Kaiser know that the caliphate ended for the Shi'ites with the last of the twelve imams, the Mahdi, who had gone into hiding. Assigning religious legitimacy to the Safavids, Rosen noted that the following dynasties, including the Qajars, presented themselves as representatives only, but were regarded as usurpers and lacked wider religious legitimacy. Equally, the rulers of Cordoba could claim to be Fatima's descendants, but the current dynasty in Morocco had never "enjoyed full recognition". The caliph title "Amir al-Muminin" (commander of the faithful) claimed by the Ottomans, which Rosen explained to be a "historical forgery", was considered in the Maghreb and among the Shi'ites as sacrilege¹²⁸:

Daher hat in der Geschichte niemals ein Zusammenwirken oder eine gegenseitige Unterstützung der drei grossen islamischen Gruppen: der Schiiten, der Maghribiten und der unter dem Osmanenszepter vereinigten Sunniten stattgefunden, so selbst nicht in den letzten

127 "Nowhere has a single successful effort been made to rejuvenate the state and social organisation through adaptation to the demands of our time, as this has happened in Japan. The Young Turks were a movement that was by nature so foreign to Islam that its failure was inevitable. The demise of Mohammadan states is rather general and the final downfall only a matter of time. Finally, there is nothing serious with the so-called Pan-Islamic movement or even a so-called "holy war", of which our newspapers project a chimera from time to time. All Mohammadan commonwealths rather seem to underlie a relentless law of nature, that leads them with or without reform – and often precisely through reform – to an inexorable downfall." Friedrich Rosen, Denkschrift (über muhammedanische Staaten) für S.M. den Kaiser 1913 überreicht, im Anschluss an ein Gespräch in Potsdam, 19 May 1913, 8, PA AA, 1.

128 Friedrich Rosen, Denkschrift (über muhammedanische Staaten), 2–3.

schweren Schicksalsjahren des Islam. Die Klüfte, welche diese Gruppen trennen, sind weniger dogmatischer als legitimistischer Natur.¹²⁹

Underlying Rosen's analysis was an understanding of legitimacy conveyed religiously. Betraying his own familiarisation with Islam in Iran, his reading of legitimacy was influenced by the Shi'ite belief that Islamic leadership was conveyed through descent from the prophet Muhammad, rather than along the Sunni model that required the election of the caliph in accordance with how close the character of candidates came to the example set by the prophet. In Rosen's view the measure of religious legitimacy that Muslim rulers could claim was important, and he pointed to examples of political consequence in Iranian and Moroccan history. Rosen reminded the Kaiser that there had been in recent years no Muslim solidarity. Even as the states lay in their "death convulsions", the Ottomans had fought the Persians, no one had lifted a finger for Morocco, the French could draw on Muslim Algerian troops who "gladly" subdued Moroccans and the reputation the Ottoman Sultan had in India was more "protest against English rule, than a feeling of true fealty".

The reasons for the apparently unrelenting decay, Rosen identified in the central role of mysticism in Islam, recommending a reading of his introduction to the republication of his father's translation of Rumi's *Masnavi*. In his introduction Rosen argued that Rumi's *Masnavi* was nearly as important for an understanding of the Islamic world as the Quran, with nearly all derwish orders following Rumi's teachings. Particularly the Mevlevi order, founded by Rumi's followers, continued to play a central role in the politics of the contemporary Ottoman empire, with its leader, the Celebi, still begirding the Ottoman sultans with the sword of the prophet, by which "the fiction of the caliphate was externally epitomised."¹³⁰

Rosen pointed the Kaiser to pages 7 to 30 of his introduction, dealing with the "mystical worldview of Jalal ed-din Rumi".¹³¹ If and what the Kaiser read we do not know, but on the topic of development and decay the following elaborations stick out in these pages: Rosen noted that preceding Haeckel and Darwin, Rumi had perceived of a philosophy of natural development. The stages of

¹²⁹ "This is why there has never been in history a collaboration or reciprocal support of the three great Islamic groups: The Shi'ites, the Maghrebites and the under the sceptre of the Ottomans united Sunnis, even not in the last grave years of Islam's destiny. The chasms, that separate these groups, are less of dogmatic than of legitimistic nature." Friedrich Rosen, Denkschrift (über muhammedanische Staaten), 3.

¹³⁰ Friedrich Rosen, Denkschrift (über muhammedanische Staaten), 2.

¹³¹ Georg Rosen and Friedrich Rosen, *Mesnevi*, 5–6.

this development, however, flowed back into and created a unity with God, a form of transcendence, which was also a removal from the physical world. Natural observation did not exist as a goal for itself. Existence in God was complete and sufficient. Rosen compared this to Christian scholasticism and the Jewish Kabbalah of the Middle Ages, but unlike in Europe this had not been challenged and replaced by critical methodology and rationalism. Still, Islam was not entirely ruled by fate and Rumi did stipulate a measure of free will and with that the responsibility for one's actions. Rosen argued that foreign development, id est foreign imposed or imitative development along the lines of the Young Turks, was doomed to fail, as it was "artificial". The decline of the Muslim states was thus not unstoppable, but development would have to come from the inside and be "organic". The final plea in the publication reads like the entire *Mesnevi* republication was a political manifesto:

Wenn jemals der Geschichtsforscher – und mit ihm der Staatsmann – sich daranmachen sollte, die Geschichte des Orients aus seinem inneren Leben zu verstehen, dann wird ihm das Studium solcher Zersetzungsfermente wie die Mystik, das er jetzt meist kaum beachtet, unentbehrlich sein zur Beurteilung der Vergangenheit und auch der tieferen Grundlage der Gegenwart. Er wird in derartigen geistigen Strömungen und in deren jahrhundertelangen Kulturkämpfen das Band finden, das die anscheinend losen und unzusammenhängenden Ereignisse aufreht und verbindet. Er wird damit den Prüfstein gewinnen, an dem er erkennt, welche sozialen und politischen Veränderungen organisch entwickelt oder assimiliert werden können und welche, nur äußerlich eingesetzt, von der Volksseele als Fremdkörper empfunden und im natürlichen Verlauf der Geschichte wieder ausgestoßen werden müssen. Genug, er wird einigermaßen dahin gelangen, die Frage zu beantworten, welche staatlichen und sozialen Organismen im modernen Völkerleben lebens- und entwicklungsfähig sind und welche nicht. Die äußere Geschichte der islamischen Staaten wird dann für ihn weniger Überraschungen bieten. Wer aber diese in den islamischen Gemeinwesen treibenden oder hemmenden Ideen und Kräfte nicht kennt, der hat noch nicht seinen Fuß in den Pfad gesetzt, der zum Verständnis der Geschichte wie der Politik des Orients führt.¹³²

132 "If ever the historian – and with him the statesman – should venture to understand the history of the Orient from its inner life, he could not dispense of a study of the ferments of decomposition such as mysticism, which he now mostly ignores, to judge the past and also the deep basis of the presence. He will find such intellectual currents and in the centuries old culture struggles the cord that lines up and connects the seemingly loose and unrelated events. With that he will win the touchstone on which he will recognise which social and political changes can be developed organically or assimilated and which ones, only inserted extrinsically, must be perceived by the folk soul to be a foreign body and in the natural course of history be ejected again. Enough, he will somewhat get to the point, to answer the question, which state and social organisms are viable and capable of development in the modern life of peoples. The external history of the Islamic states will then offer fewer surprises. Who, however, does not know these in the Islamic commonwealths driving and hemming ideas and forces has not set his foot in the path

Rosen's memorandum for the Kaiser betrays the sources of his ideas that had been formative for his position in the debate over the usage and weaponisation of Islam by Germany in a potential war. Notably present are his diplomatic stations, with concrete references to the recent political histories of Iran, Morocco and the Ottoman Empire. In Tehran, Baghdad, Jerusalem and Tangier, Rosen had witnessed first-hand the disintegration of the three states and the *pénétration pacifique et guerrière* which accelerated this process. The reports that arrived on his desk at the Auswärtiges Amt from all over the Orient synthesised his views on the Muslim world and led him to understand how information gathered in the diplomatic field entered into the formation of policy and decision-making. The pivotal argument in Rosen's memorandum, the centrality of mysticism, Rumi and the derwish orders and the necessity for politicians to recognise and understand this centrality demonstrates that Rosen was beyond his diplomatic functions rooted in Sufi Islam that oscillated between an absorption of concepts, thinking and practices and a belief in this thought-system being at the core of the decline of the Islamic world. The two poles in this worldview were embodied by the custodians of Rumi's tomb in Konya, incapable of understanding and studying the *Mesnevi* thoroughly and thus no longer infusing the teachings of Rumi with the contemplation needed for development, and the "Sufis in silk" around Safi 'Ali Shah and Zahir ed-Dowleh he had joined at the court in Tehran, who philosophised, deliberated and reformulated Sufi and wider Islamic practices for a modern world. The centrality of Sufi Islam in politics, society and culture was what Rosen believed to constitute the most significant factor that differentiated politics in the Muslim world. This was not recognised in Europe and as a consequence initiatives and policies were produced that were going nowhere, or were even – intentionally – harmful for the development and integrity of Muslim states.

We may recognise two contrasting similarities to Max von Oppenheim here. Oppenheim's political socialisation was dominated by interactions with Cairo's well-situated modernist Pan-Islamic intelligentsia, eventually feeding into his belief that an anti-Imperialist revolutionisation of the Orient through Islam was possible and desirable.¹³³ Rosen thought nothing of such ideas, discarding Pan-Islam as a fluke, and Western oriented modernists as artificial and counter-productive. Rosen's thought was informed by his infatuation with Persian poetry and culture, his encounters in Iran, and his engagement with Sufi orders. Syn-

that leads to understanding the history and the politics of the Orient." Georg Rosen and Friedrich Rosen, *Mesnevi*, 29.

133 M. Hanisch, "Anti-imperiale Befreiung," 22–25.

cretising Sufi concepts of the “Pfad” (path: *tariqa*) and “Verständnis” (understanding/gnosis: *‘irfan*) with a vocabulary of natural selection that bordered on social Darwinism on a global scale and quite in line with the dog-eat-dog imperialism of the day, Rosen did not prescribe any solution or political plan of action, but a quest for real knowledge without which any political initiatives would be found wanting. Organic development, Rosen thought, meant that European interference needed to be scaled back and that also included German involvement. But as the international political system did not allow for such organic development to come about, the Muslim states were about to fall, jihad was but a mirage, and Germany should prioritise coming to an accord with Britain.

Another difference between Oppenheim and Rosen was their respective position in German foreign affairs before the war and their socio-economic background. Of independent means, Oppenheim was no integral part of the German foreign-service, without a proper understanding of the institutional ins and outs of the *Auswärtige Amt* or the back and forth of daily diplomacy. It is not surprising that until the war Oppenheim’s reports were filed without being read. Rosen was a career diplomat, who had learnt the trade from the bottom up and had to toe the line of the administration in order to advance in his career. As such and also due to his upbringing as son of a diplomat in the time of Bismarck, Rosen thought about foreign policy in realist terms of power, with a dwindling belief in international cooperation functioning as a pacifying force. The sympathies Rosen harboured for Muslim states were not satisfied by Europeanising nationalists, but he sought a rooting of Muslim revival in an activation of the scientific potential inherent in Islam. Holy war was not part of that thought and Rosen did not perceive of jihad as a struggle or striving for knowledge (of God), as was common among Sufis.¹³⁴ Not perceiving of any positive alternatives amid European preponderance, Rosen advocated to minimise harm for Germany and hoped that by dissociating Germany from the Ottoman Empire, this would offer the best chance for Ottoman survival.

The value of Rosen’s memorandum for the Kaiser – at three pages quite short and tailored to the political situation – is mostly one of retrospection. It had little effect on further political developments. A few weeks later, the delegation of general Liman von Sanders left for Constantinople to reorganise the Ottoman army and drew Germany closer to the Ottoman Empire. It rattled Russian territorial designs and effected an anti-German propaganda campaign, which in turn caused further difficulties in Anglo-German negotiations on the endpoint of

134 Harry S. Neale, *Jihad in Premodern Sufi Writings* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 47–56, 75–121.

the Baghdad railway.¹³⁵ In a letter to friend and colonial secretary Wilhelm Solf on 21 December 1913 Rosen fumed that

neue Komplikationen entstanden sind durch die unselige Idee der türkischen Militärmission. Sie werden sehen, was aus diesem Hexenkessel noch alles herausgären wird! Man hat doch nun genug Tatsachen gesehen, um daraus zu erlernen, daß die Türkei auf die Dauer nicht mehr zu retten ist und daß die ihr gespendete Hilfe dem Helfer selbst schaden muß. Erinnern Sie sich noch meines Gespräches hierüber in der Bahn auf der Rückfahrt von Hamburg, meiner Gespräche mit S.M. und der Erörterungen im A.A.? Durch die Erteilung des Oberkommandos in Constantinopel an einen deutschen General hat die Türkei uns nolentes volentes zu ihrem Bundesgenossen gemacht, und zwar gegen alle jene Mächte, die nahe oder entfernte Absichten auf die Türkei haben oder die uns nicht wohl wollen... Müssen wir nun auch noch der sterbenden Türkei die Existenz garantieren? Und was hätten wir im besten Fall davon für Vorteil? In Wirklichkeit haben wir jetzt einen Kampf gegen die Triple-Entente, den England gegen uns ausfechten muß.¹³⁶

Alongside the letter Rosen also sent the *Mesnevi* to Solf as further illustration of his opinions. Another copy went to the by then retired Bülow in Rome, who in his reply from early 1914 boiled it down to: "Der harte Calvinismus der Anglo-Sachsen ist als Gedankenwelt weniger sympathisch, aber politisch offenbar profitabler."¹³⁷

Occupied with another battle in Portugal and away from the levers of political control, however much Rosen lobbied against an alliance with the Ottoman Empire and the belief in an Islamic wonder weapon, he failed to reach those people in charge. The conversation in the Auswärtiges Amt he had mentioned to Solf had come to naught, Bülow was retired, Solf as colonial secretary busy with Africa, and the Kaiser either ignored Rosen's warning, was himself no longer entire-

135 Schöllgen, *Deutsche Außenpolitik*, 111–12; Clark, *Schlafwandler*, 434–47.

136 "new complications were raised by the disastrous idea of the Turkish military mission. You will see what will fester forth from this witch's cauldron! One should have seen enough facts to learn that Turkey cannot be saved for long and that the donated help must hurt the helper. Do you still remember our conversation about this in the train ride back from Hamburg, my conversations with His Majesty, and the discussions in the Auswärtiges Amt? By granting supreme command to a German general in Constantinople Turkey has nolentes volentes made us their ally, and namely against all these powers, that have close or distant designs on Turkey or that do not wish us well... Must we now also guarantee dying Turkey's existence? And what would we get from it in the best of cases? In reality we now have a fight against the Triple-Entente, that England must fight out against us." Friedrich Rosen, *Bukarest. Lissabon*, 270–71.

137 "The hard Calvinism of the Anglo-Saxons is as a way of thinking less sympathetic, but more profitable politically it appears." Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 331.

ly in control or both. In the July Crisis of 1914 the Kaiser ordered the inflaming of the Muslim world and Moltke saw the day of fanatical liberation come.

7.4 A Note on Religious Figures in Mesopotamia in 1914

Shortly after the outbreak of the war, on 16 August 1914, the German ambassador to Spain Max von Ratibor wired a telegram to the Auswärtiges Amt, which cited Rosen, as follows: “Anheimstelle Einwirkung auf Mohammdaner Indiens von Bagdad aus und zwar auf Sunniten durch den Nekib in Bagdad und auf Shiiten durch Mudschtehid in Kerbela. Rosen”.¹³⁸ The telegram demonstrates that Rosen was well-aware of Germany’s intentions to agitate in the Muslim world in the war. Its brevity was probably due to two connected reasons. Rosen was busy keeping Portugal neutral, and he no longer played a dominant role in Germany’s Orient policy. His two-line contribution can be read as a sober recognition of that fact.

Rosen’s suggestion itself is interesting, as Baghdad was only a short station on his circuit. It would, however, have been enough to grasp the extend of connections existing between the Mujtahids of Kerbala and Najaf with the Shi’ite community of Lucknow in India. Rosen had visited Kerbala and spoken to Shi’ite pilgrims and religious students there. Back then in 1898, he wrote to his brother of Kerbala as offering a free space to pilgrims, also sexually, and notably for both men and women. Rosen noted the absence of “fanaticism and unfriendliness”.¹³⁹

The hint at the “Nekib”, the naqib al-ashraf, resulted from the figure being a high Ottoman government official among the provincial notables, but also due to the nuqaba al-ashraf of Baghdad traditionally being descendants from Abd al-Qadir al-Gaylani (1077–1166), a prominent jurist and Sufi and name giver to the Qadiriya tariqa. The Qadiriya order had followers all over the Muslim world, including at the Ottoman sultan’s court and across India. The naqib al-ashraf was the keeper of the shrine of al-Gaylani and since the 1870s had used his “influence and power, both in Iraq and in India, in favour of the Ottoman government, and they were in turn very popular with the Ottoman authorities”, as Martin observed. The extensive travelling of the Qadiriya between Iraq

138 “Leave to your digression influencing Mohammadans of India from Baghdad and namely on Sunnis through naqib in Baghdad and on Shi’ites through mujtahid in Kerbala.” Max von Ratibor and Corvey to AA, 16 August 1914, A 21272, R 21070, PA AA.

139 Friedrich Rosen, 1898, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte II*, 7 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 165–168.

and India “caused alarm to British officials”, who accused them of being Pan-Islamic. The Qadiriya was also the order that was particularly successful in proselytizing in German East Africa.¹⁴⁰

Rosen's note found its way via Zimmermann to Oppenheim “for urgent handling”. Oppenheim responded that he had “since the beginning of my operations in the *Auswärtiges Amt* repeatedly verbally and in my written documentation called attention to this” and that Curt Prüfer, Oppenheim's right hand in Constantinople, had already been instructed to follow the same goals.¹⁴¹ The literature on German jihad shows little sign of such a policy. Be that as it may, Rosen's telegram would at least have reinforced part of the strategy of revolutionising India. In advising to influence Muslims in India through Iraq, and contributing to a politics of sedition, the note contradicted Rosen's position from a year earlier, but this was in line with Rosen, like the rest of the German diplomatic apparatus, engaging in international propaganda warfare after the war broke out. This would be the case with Portugal, which Rosen tried to keep neutral through propaganda, and also from 1916 onwards in the Netherlands. “Einwirkung” (influencing) certainly should be read as both propaganda effort and activities beyond, and it stands to reason that although he did not think the war was going to be won by Islam, Rosen found efforts to sway public opinion in India through the good offices of clerics in Baghdad a legitimate and not entirely impractical weapon.

This appears to have been Rosen's only direct contribution to the NfdO. Taking stock of Germany's revolutionising policy under the impression of Snouck Hurgronje's “outrageous brochure” in a letter in January 1915, Becker wrote: “Mit bekanntem Geschicke haben wir natürlich eine ganze Reihe höchst ungeeigneter Zivilagenten, die sich am stärksten herangedrängt hatten, [in den Orient] hinausgeschickt ... Rosen wird in Lissabon verbraucht usw. usw.”¹⁴²

140 Gökhan Çetinsaya, *The Ottoman Administration of Iraq, 1890–1908* (London: Routledge, 2006), 19–20; Martin, “Qadiriya Brotherhood in East Africa,” 472.

141 Max von Oppenheim to Arthur Zimmermann, 16 August 1914, A 21272, R 21070, PA AA.

142 “With familiar skill we have of course sent to the Orient a whole series of highly unsuitable civil agents, that have surged forward... Rosen is being wasted in Lisbon etc.” Carl-Heinrich Becker to Ernst Herzfeld, 19 January 1915, 40 23 VI HA NL Becker, PA AA.

7.5 Disagreements over Germany's Middle East War Effort in 1916

With the confiscation of a German fleet in Portuguese waters and the subsequent German declaration of war, Rosen was evacuated from Portugal via Spain and arrived back in Berlin in April 1916.¹⁴³ Back in Berlin, Rosen entered the circles of Wilhelm Solf, who had become active in the Deutsche Gesellschaft 1914, a discussion club across party lines. There, according to his memoirs, Rosen met with a number of former diplomats, consuls and dragomans, who had served in the East, and were, as they thought, not consulted enough on war policy:

All diese waren sich mit mir einig über die Sinnlosigkeit der vom Auswärtigen Amt betriebenen Kriegspolitik mit Bezug auf den Orient. Ich hätte über die Wahnvorstellungen gelacht, von denen diejenigen beherrscht wurden, die mit der politischen Leitung oder Ausführung deutscher Unternehmungen in allen mohammedanischen Ländern betraut waren, wenn uns die Sache nicht zu ernst vorgekommen wäre. Aber im Auswärtigen Amt glaubte man damals... fest an die grüne Fahne des Propheten und den Heiligen Krieg... So wie Voltaire als der Vater der französischen Revolution angesehen wird, so konnte man Karl May als den Vater unserer Orientpolitik dieser Zeit betrachten. Was an Kenntnissen des Orients existierte, ging jedenfalls über diese wohl einzige Quelle kaum hinaus.

Rosen remembered “single adventurers” who went on horse to Afghanistan and into the deserts of Central Asia, who “perhaps contributed to bind single but not important enemy forces in India and keep them away from the European arena of war... but over it all hovered the spirit of romanticism, often reminding of the times of the Crusades.”¹⁴⁴

Cited here from his memoirs, which he wrote between 1921 and 1926, the accuracy and connections Rosen described should be taken with a grain of salt. His sense of indignation of not being consulted more as an “Orientkenner” clearly shone through. Considering that by 1916 all members of the NfdO had become

143 Herold, “Orientalista, diplomata e político,” 1; Wilhelm Solf to F. C. Andreas, 1 May 1916, 410 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG; Friedrich Rosen to Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg, 13 May 1916, 5293, Personalakten 12576, PA AA.

144 “All of them were in agreement with me about the senselessness of the by the Auswärtiges Amt pursued war policy concerning the Orient. I would have laughed about the delusion that possessed those of our political leadership or in charge of executing German undertakings in all Mohammadan countries, had the matter not appeared too serious to us. But in the Auswärtiges Amt at the time belief... was strong in the green flag of the prophet and holy war... Like Voltaire is regarded the father of the French revolution, one could regard Karl May to be the father of our Orient politics at the time. What knowledge existed about the Orient, did in any case not go beyond this likely only source.” Friedrich Rosen, *Ende des Kaiserreichs. Weimarer Republik*, 54–55.

disillusioned by the notion of jihad or the Pan-Islamic solution, amid altercations among Arab, Turkish and Persian Muslims that were witnessed first-hand by many of the NfdO's employees, the matter of the "green banner of the prophet" may rather have been Rosen's memories of the first two war years and less a description of the summer of 1916 itself, when the Arab revolt against the Ottomans started under the Sharif of Mecca, Hussein. Oberhaus' assertion that the NfdO and Oppenheim "had without a doubt a higher scholarly standard than Karl May" is accurate, but does not speak to the pronounced sense of the adventurist German projection Rosen evoked with the reference to Karl May. The activities of people like Nadolny, Blücher, Hentig, Niedermayer, Klein, Wassmuss, Mannesmann and others appeared quite in line with Rosen's Karl May simile.¹⁴⁵ The NfdO continued its propaganda work in various Middle Eastern languages, also invoking the language of jihad, but as in the case of the Iranian newspaper *Kaveh* the propaganda was German supported Iranian nationalism cloaked in language of national holy war, not Pan-Islamic jihadism.¹⁴⁶

An episode in the summer of 1916, that had evoked Rosen's long-lived Karl May simile, may very well have been the reason for Rosen's appointment to The Hague, rather than to Constantinople, in the autumn of that year. In a conversation with a number of consuls and dragomans, including the long-serving consul in the Ottoman Empire Wilhelm Padel, on a planned joined German-Ottoman attack against Egypt, Rosen was asked to intervene with the Auswärtiges Amt. Previous military attacks had unsettled the British and tied down troops in Egypt but not brought about the hoped for dislodging of the British from its artery to India, the Suez Canal.¹⁴⁷

145 Salvador Oberhaus, "'Zum wilden Aufstande entflammen'. Die deutsche Ägyptenpolitik 1914 bis 1918. Ein Beitrag zur Propagandageschichte des Ersten Weltkrieges" (PhD diss., Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf, 2006), 151; Jonas and Zinke, "Nadolny und deutsche Persienpolitik"; Berman, *Orientalismus, Kolonialismus und Moderne*.

146 Höpp, *Arabische und islamische Periodika*; Oesterheld, "Indische Präsenz in Deutschland"; Epkenhans, *Iranische Moderne im Exil*; Ilse Itscherenska, "Ḥeydar Ḥān, das Berliner Persische Komitee und die Deutschen. Interkulturelle Begegnungen im Ersten Weltkrieg," in *Fremdeinsätze. Afrikaner und Asiaten in Europäischen Kriegen, 1914–1945*, Gerhard Höpp and Brigitte Reinwald (Berlin: Das Arabische Buch, 2000), 57–78; Maren Bragulla, *Die Nachrichtenstelle für den Orient. Fallstudie einer Propagandainstitution im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag Dr. Müller, 2007); Fromkin, *Peace to End All Peace*, 219–28.

147 Padel had studied Turkish at the SOS in 1889. Mangold-Will that Padel stood in opposition to the "Asienkämpfer", a club of men in the Weimar Republic who had fought in the East, and thought the consul an old school diplomat. Mangold-Will, *Begrenzte Freundschaft*, 187–88; Will, *Kein Griff nach der Weltmacht*, 65–66, 190.

In a conversation with deputy state secretary and OHL intimus Zimmermann, Rosen presented his and his colleagues' reservations. Zimmermann rebuffed Rosen's concerns. He had learned from General von Lossow, who had toured the front with Enver Pasha, of the "easy feasibility of the attack on Egypt". Rosen warned that there was not enough water south of Hebron for such a massive attack, which Zimmermann countered by noting that there were cisterns along the way. Rosen replied that he knew these cisterns from when he lived in Jerusalem and that they only kept the water from the little downpour in the winter. He told Zimmermann that all the cisterns in the vicinity would only be enough for what "50 camels drink in one day." Zimmermann supposedly answered: "I thought camels don't need to drink."¹⁴⁸ Regardless if that exchange really took place quite as unfavourably for Zimmermann, Rosen left a clear enough impression with the *Auswärtiges Amt* in the summer of 1916 that he would not be the new German ambassador needed for Constantinople. The ambassador at the time, Paul Metternich, had expressed too many qualms about the Armenian Genocide to the Ottoman leadership and was replaced after only one year on the post. Rosen was instead sent to the Netherlands in November, where he took over from Richard von Kühlmann, who moved to Constantinople.¹⁴⁹ During a period of German diplomats sounding out the possibilities of peace with England, the anglophile Rosen was more useful in the neutral Netherlands and a likely constant diplomatic opponent as ambassador would not bode well for future military undertakings in the Ottoman empire.¹⁵⁰

The Sinai campaign was a disaster. Supplies collapsed and soldiers ate grass to survive. A participating officer recounted in 1919 that the "unsurveyed territory, and its tropical heat and lack of water, combined with the few and indifferent roads and means of communication, offered great difficulties for carrying out military operations... these difficulties were not sufficiently appreciated by either the Turkish or the German General Staffs."¹⁵¹ Uninformed decisions could also be made without believing in the winning forces of holy war. Rosen's retroactive mashing together in his memoirs of Pan-Islamic jihad and by 1916 unconnected German adventurism culminating in an exasperated Karl May reference should be understood in context of long-standing misgivings he and other marginalised

148 Friedrich Rosen and Herbert Müller-Werth, *Ende des Kaiserreichs. Weimarer Republik*, 56.

149 Gottlieb von Jagow to Graf von Roedern, 5 October 1916, 25094, Personalakten 12576, PA AA.

150 Chickering, *Germany and the Great War*, 168–69.

151 Trumpener, *Germany and the Ottoman Empire, 1914–1918*, 122–24; L. Hanisch, *Nachfolger der Exegeten*; "A German Account of the German-Turkish Expedition Against the Suez Canal in 1916," *Royal United Services Institution* 65, no. 458 (1920): 353.

officials experienced and points to these wider contestations of German Orient politics at the time of war and in the post-war period.

7.6 An Iranian Overture and Its Patriotic Implications in Late 1917

With the NfdO's European campaigns focussing on Geneva as a centre of Iranian, Turkish, Arab and Indian exile, Rosen's posting to The Hague in 1916 was of no relevance to Germany's campaigns in the Middle East. Rosen was preoccupied on the one hand with lobbying Dutch politicians and the public to stay neutral and not fall into the British camp, and on the other to keep territorial designs of the German military leadership under Erich Ludendorff and Paul von Hindenburg at bay.¹⁵²

In the first days of December 1917, a confidential letter reached Rosen from the chancellery in Berlin, noting that the Persian government had repeatedly requested a new German envoy in Tehran: "This request the Persian ambassador in Constantinople has now renewed and in this context expressed the wish that Your Excellency should be sent [to Tehran], as the best expert of his country." The chancellery expected an armistice with Russia very soon, Rosen was informed, and that "in this state of affairs we must take pains to immediately and energetically maintain our interests in Tehran, which are now only endangered by England." The travel route via Russia or Constantinople and Baku should be safe after an armistice had been signed with the Russians and Rosen could leave for Iran very soon. The chancellery wanted Rosen's d'accord for this "difficult but important and gratifying task" before recommending as much to the secretary of state Richard von Kühlmann at the Auswärtiges Amt.¹⁵³

Rosen answered a few days later with "all candour": "Es ist eine alte Lieblingsidee des mir befreundeten Persischen Botschafters in Constantinople, Ihtisham es-Saltaneh, dass Deutschland einen Diplomaten von Ruf und Antecedentien nach Teheran entsenden möge, anstatt, wie bisher, die persische Hauptstadt als ersten Gesandtenposten zu behandeln." Rosen continued that the idea of having a senior German diplomat posted to Tehran was common among Persian nationalists, thereby wanting to "die deutsche Politik vor den Wagen ihrer so gut

¹⁵² Friedrich Rosen to Oskar Mann, 13 May 1917, 17, 1888 Darmstaedter 2b, StaBiB; Eversdijk, *Kultur als politisches Werbemittel*, 97–101; Frey, "Bullying Neutrals"; Lademacher, *Zwei Ungleiche Nachbarn*, 98–118; Nicolaas Japiske, "Die politischen Beziehungen Hollands zu Deutschland in ihrer historischen Entwicklung," *Schriften des Holland-Instituts* 3 (1925): 5–24.

¹⁵³ Arnold Wahnschaffe to Friedrich Rosen, 29 November 1917, 2447, Personalakten 12569, PA AA.

wie verlorenen Sache spannen. Sie spekulieren dabei auf die deutsche Orientromantik und hoffen, dass es vielleicht doch noch dem deutschen *deus ex machina* gelingen werde die sonst unlösbare Lage zu lösen." In his lengthy reply, Rosen drew comparisons to the German experience of "miserable impotence" in Morocco, where diplomacy failed to deliver against the "ruthless enemy troops" of the French generals. Rosen argued that Russia moving out of Persia did not create a vacuum, but meant that the Persian Rifles of Percy Sykes would quickly establish a new order, as the British had already pushed into central Persia. German military missions had failed miserably before, because "Persia lies after all completely outside our action radius". This had not changed: "Würde bei dieser Sachlage ein Diplomat meines "standing" jetzt nach Teheran entsandt, so würde schon seine bloße Ernennung sofort die größte Aufmerksamkeit unsrer Feinde erregen und sie zu Gegenmaßregeln veranlassen, die ja ganz in ihrer Macht stehen, da sie das Land, den Schah und seine Regierung beherrschen."¹⁵⁴

In Rosen's assessment, Germany only had minor economic interests in Persia and should be realistic about its political interests in the country amid the geopolitical situation. A policy of accommodation with the major powers in the region, as pursued before the war, was the best option, and would have been the best option in Morocco, rather than trying to fight the French on the side of the Moroccan Sultan. Rosen outright pleaded with the chancellery to believe that he did not refuse out of personal reasons, but that he would "be willing to bring the sacrifice at war of going to Tehran, if I believed, that it would bring any use and if not rather I had to fear severe damage for the Reich." Or as Blücher, who had been in Iran as part of the German expedition to prop up the Iranian nationalist government in 1916, noted after the war: Iran was in its shackled and tattered condition not a beneficial ally, but a "negative value, that was bound to strain Germany militarily, politically and financially."¹⁵⁵

154 "It is an old pet idea of my friend the Persian ambassador in Constantinople, Ehtesham es-Saltaneh, that Germany should dispatch a diplomat of reputation and antecedents to Tehran, rather than as has been custom to treat the Persian capital as a first envoy position... wanting to pull German politics into their almost lost case. They speculate on German Orient romanticism and hope that the German *deus ex machina* may yet succeed in solving the unsolvable situation... Would in this situation a diplomat of my "standing" now be sent to Tehran, even the mere appointment would draw the greatest attention of our enemies and cause them to take up countermeasures, which are entirely in their hand, as they control country, Shah and his government." Friedrich Rosen to Arnold Wahnschaffe, 5 December 1917, 2538, Personalakten 12569, PA AA.

155 Friedrich Rosen to Arnold Wahnschaffe, 5 December 1917, 2538, Personalakten 12569, PA AA; Blücher, *Zeitenwende*, 16.

In the exchange of letters ensuing between new German ambassador Johann von Bernstorff in Constantinople, Hilmar von dem Bussche-Haddenhausen in the Auswärtiges Amt and state secretary Kühlmann, it becomes clear that Ehtesham es-Saltaneh, was “over a glass of tea” quite adamant about wanting Rosen as new German envoy. Ehtesham es-Saltaneh, who had since his time as envoy in Berlin become a leading figure in the Iranian Constitutional Revolution before being appointed ambassador in Constantinople in 1910, had refused Rudolf Nadolny as new German envoy due to his tainted reputation after he failed in 1916 to prop up the nationalist government in Kermanshah, and because Rosen “was in no manner compromised as partisan, but would be received by all people and parties as a friend.”¹⁵⁶

The opinion in the Auswärtiges Amt was that Rosen would certainly give in, if he was only asked nicely by the Kaiser. The Kaiser made his agreement contingent on Rosen's placement away from The Hague not negatively affecting German relations with the Dutch Queen Wilhemina.¹⁵⁷ Eventually Kühlmann – with whom Rosen had been on good terms on account of their shared pro-peace stance and attempts to come to an agreement with Britain, but who was now under the control of the OHL of Ludendorff and Hindenburg to whom the “appearance of moderation... was distasteful” – wrote to Rosen on 2 January 1918 that Germany could not allow Britain to take over more of Persia now that Russia was out of the game, and that a “first force” was needed for Persia.¹⁵⁸ That force was to be Rosen, who combined

allgemeine politische Fähigkeiten, auf Kenntnis und Verständnis für die orientalische und insbesondere persische Psyche... und daß für eine solche Aufgabe nicht leicht ein Berufener zu finden ist, brauche ich Ihnen, einem so gründlichen Kenner des nahen Orients und ersten Autorität in Fragen des persischen Geisteslebens nicht auseinanderzusetzen.

Kühlmann was counting on Rosen's “patriotic willingness” and informed him that the Kaiser had agreed.¹⁵⁹

156 Jonas and Zinke, “Nadolny und deutsche Persienpolitik”; Johann Henrich von Bernstorff to Arnold Wahnschaffe, 18 December 1917, 2636, Personalakten 12569, PA AA; Hilmar von dem Bussche-Haddenhausen to Richard von Kühlmann, 18 December 1917, 2636, Personalakten 12569, PA AA; Blücher, *Zeitenwende*, 31–32.

157 Grünau to Arnold Wahnschaffe, 19 December 1917, 2641, Personalakten 12569, PA AA.

158 Chickering, *Germany and the Great War*, 171–75; Ferguson, *Falscher Krieg*, 277–78; Richard von Kühlmann, *Erinnerungen* (Heidelberg: Lambert Schneider, 1948), 569–80.

159 Richard von Kühlmann to Friedrich Rosen, 2 January 1918, 2538, Personalakten 12569, PA AA.

Realising that his appointment to Tehran had become imminent, Rosen travelled to Berlin on January 7 to convince Kühlmann of the forlornness of his appointment to Iran. But Kühlmann did not receive Rosen. In a long letter Rosen tried to impress upon Kühlmann that “the question of influencing Persia against England is not political but military”, that Germany was about to repeat all the mistakes it had made in Morocco, deliver easy victories to the British, and further tarnish the Kaiser’s reputation as a daredevil and troublemaker. German politics should no longer believe that only the knowledge of a foreign language and culture would be enough to counter military supremacy. An intervention in Persia would only be “war prolonging”.¹⁶⁰

A few days later Rosen called at the Neues Palais in Potsdam to inquire if he could deliver the New Year greetings of Queen Wilhemina to the Kaiser. The Kaiser received him a few hours later for lunch. In his memoirs, Rosen recalled the meeting:

Er empfing mich mit den Worten: “Der Koran sagt, ein jedes Ding kehrt zu seinem Ursprung zurück, so werden Sie auch wieder nach Persien zurückkehren, wo Sie ja ganz zuhause sind. Ich verspreche mir viel von Ihrer Tätigkeit in Teheran etc.” Es fiel mir nicht leicht, diese Gedankengänge zu unterbrechen, um dem Kaiser die Gründe darzulegen, welche mir die Reise nach Persien untunlich, ja unmöglich erscheinen ließen. Kaum aber hatte ich die ersten Worte gesagt, aus denen meinen Abgeneigtheit hervorging, als der Kaiser mich unterbrach: “Na, also dann nicht. Einverstanden.” Als ich noch etwas hinzufügen wollte, warf er ein: “Das genügt schon. Hiermit ist die Sache endgültig ausgedanden.”¹⁶¹

A week later Kühlmann answered to Rosen’s letter that he understood his position and still thought that he would have been the best placement, but that the glaucoma in Rosen’s eye, which had been worsening since the war had started, was prohibitive of Rosen’s posting to Persia. By 1917, the Kaiser had lost most of his power to the military figures Hindenburg and Ludendorff, but had maintained as last real lever of power the right to appoint envoys abroad. His objec-

160 Friedrich Rosen to Richard von Kühlmann, 14 January 1918, 2538, Personalakten 12569, PA AA.

161 “He received me with the words: ‘The Quran says, everything returns to its origin, and likewise you will return to Persia, where you are entirely at home. I expect much from your activities in Tehran etc.’ It was not easy for me to interrupt his thoughts, to present to the Kaiser the reasons, which had the voyage appear to me as infeasible, yes impossible. Barely though had I said a few words, from which my disinclination became clear, when the Kaiser interrupted me: ‘So, then not. Agreed.’ When I had wanted to add something he interjected. ‘That will do. Hereby the matter is conclusively over.’ Friedrich Rosen, *Ende des Kaiserreichs. Weimarer Republik*, 132–34.

tion was determinative in the matter, but it appears that Kühlmann had independently come to the conclusion that Rosen should stay in The Hague.¹⁶²

The veracity of the intrigue Rosen smelled in Berlin should not be of a prime concern here, but rather that Rosen afterwards saw his loyalty to Kühlmann dissolved, influencing his actions in The Hague in the spring of 1918 over the “zand en grind quaestie” (sand and gravel question) and German military passage rights, with which Ludendorff tried to create a *casus belli* for a German invasion. Taking considerable professional risk, Rosen did not deliver a German ultimatum, as he had been instructed. The passage of time then dissipated the conflict.¹⁶³ The appointment of a new German envoy to Tehran dragged on. The Ottoman grand vizier Talaat Pasha advised ambassador Bernstorff in Constantinople to wait, as sending a new envoy to Tehran would necessitate “nearly putting together an army... as there were still some Russian gangs in Persia and everywhere English officers.” Hans von Seeckt, chief of staff of the Ottoman army, continued to press for a new appointment of an envoy and renewed propaganda in Persia. The Auswärtiges Amt reproached the OHL that experience had shown that even propaganda spread with the greatest amounts of financial means had not brought about sustainable success, if not substantiated by troops on the ground.¹⁶⁴ With the war all but lost, Rosen managed at last to imprint himself on German foreign affairs.

In this last exposure of Rosen to Germany's Orient politics, the hallmarks of his political thinking were manifested in full form. Soft power and cultural knowledge were nice, but susceptible to romanticism. Romantic notions should not obfuscate the realities of hard power, namely military strength. Foreign policy should be conducted accordingly to minimise military altercations. Marchand has noted on the episode that “Rosen did not apprise the Kaiser of his doubts, thinking Wilhelm too weak for serious concerns”, that no other German Orientalist voiced his concern to the Kaiser, and that thus “German Orientalists have sins to answer for”. This hinges on the notion that the Kaiser was at this point still in

162 Richard von Kühlmann to Friedrich Rosen, 24 January 1918, 155, Personalakten 12569, PA AA; Richard von Kühlmann to Hilmar von dem Bussche-Haddenhausen, 16 January 1918, 119, Personalakten 12569, PA AA; Chickering, *Germany and the Great War*, 171–72; Clark, *Herrschaft des letzten deutschen Kaisers*, 292–93; Ferguson, *Falscher Krieg*, 277.

163 Japiske, *Stellung Hollands im Weltkrieg*, 163; Friedrich Rosen, *Ende des Kaiserreichs. Weimarer Republik*, 157; Smit, *Nederland in de Wereldoorlog*, 20–24; Eversdijk, *Kultur als Werbemittel*, 107–8; Herbert Müller-Werth, “3. Besuch bei Rosen,” 4 August 1933, 2 NL Müller-Werth 1199/34, HHStAW.

164 Hilmar von dem Bussche-Haddenhausen to Kurt von Lersner, 24 April 1918, A 16518, R 19094, PA AA.

control of foreign and Orient policy, which he had for all intents and purposes ceded to the “terrible twins” Ludendorff and Hindenburg by 1916, while himself studying the ancient Anatolian Hittites.¹⁶⁵ The power that Wilhelm II still had was to appoint or refuse appointment of diplomatic staff abroad – and he used it. Moreover, Rosen did in fact fulfil his “responsibility to try”, but as Marchand rightly notes, it “made no difference to the course of events”.¹⁶⁶ Rosen had learned as much already in 1913, calling to mind Jung’s “lessons” drawn from the Ottoman-German jihad controversy: “The rational and public justification of specific policies cannot be grounded in academic scholarship alone. Rather, it is driven by the personal and institutional interests of policy-makers and the societal questions that dominate the realms of everyday politics.”¹⁶⁷

8 Integration, Rejection and Formation of Knowledge

In his Weimar era memoirs, Rosen accused foreign policymakers of the late Kaiserreich to have “worshipped” Pan-Turanian and Pan-Islamic ideas in the hope of creating a friendly Eurasian empire reaching to China:

Alliterationen, wie Berlin-Bagdad, oder Hamburg-Herat, klangen damals verheißungsvoll in den Ohren der Gläubigen. Diese ganze Orientpolitik wurde damals betrieben von phantasiereichen Gelegenheits-Arbeitern unter Ausschaltung all derer, die mit den Verhältnissen dieser Länder wirklich vertraut waren.¹⁶⁸

Although he did not mention Oppenheim and others involved in the NfdO or in the wider attempts to revolutionise the Islamic world by name, the thrust of his argument in their direction was clear.¹⁶⁹ The figures Rosen identified as driving

¹⁶⁵ Chickering, *Germany and the Great War*, 172.

¹⁶⁶ Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 445.

¹⁶⁷ Jung, “Lessons for the Contemporary ‘Area Studies’”, 264.

¹⁶⁸ “Alliterations, like Berlin-Baghdad, or Hamburg-Herat, then sounded auspicious in the ears of the believers. This entire Orient policy was back then driven by imaginative casual workers under elimination of all those who were really familiar with the conditions of those countries.” Friedrich Rosen, *Ende des Kaiserreichs. Weimarer Republik*, 140.

¹⁶⁹ Rosen and Oppenheim were on good terms in the Weimar Republic, with Oppenheim sending to “mein lieber Herr Minister” a postcard from his excavations in Tell Halaf in 1929 and Rosen contributing to a Festschrift on Oppenheim’s seventieth birthday. Max von Oppenheim to Friedrich Rosen, 23 August 1929, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen, “Altpersische Legende über die Herkunft des Weines. Aus einer neuentdeckten Schrift Omar-i Khajjams,” in *Aus fünf Jahrtausenden*.

figures of the policy were the deceased Adolf Marschall von Bieberstein and Colmar von der Goltz. Among his living colleagues at the Auswärtiges Amt, Arthur Zimmermann received a lot of blame in Rosen's memoirs, Richard von Kühlmann less so.¹⁷⁰ Also in a show of burgher solidarity Rosen sided with the dragomans and consuls of the foreign service, who were not heard. Rosen did make his positions very clear, but like those lowly figures of the foreign service with their ear on the ground, Rosen's input did not count much. It stands to reason that Rosen purposefully excluded the 1913 memorandum he submitted to the Kaiser from his memoirs, as it would have unfavourably demonstrated his lack of influence with the man in Potsdam, whose power Rosen tried to leverage first against the policies pursued by Bülow and Holstein and later against the military. Rosen knew that the Kaiser had ordered setting the Orient on fire when the war broke out, and the interventions of the "Orientkenner" had not produced the hoped-for results.

As the German foreign policy apparatus faced the rapid expansion of German foreign and economic affairs, its culture stayed one of nobility of independent means entertaining European relations under a set of relatively regulated rules and patterns of action. Not only was the Auswärtiges Amt often overwhelmed by the growing scope of its tasks, but it also tended to structurally exclude the opinions and observations of those placed in the extra-European peripheries – most of them burghers. This changed with the outbreak of the war, as difficult to control outsiders streamed into the foreign affairs apparatus amid a patriotic-opportunist outburst. As the war progressed foreign relations became ever more subservient to military affairs with (oppositional) input of diplomats counting less and less. Rosen moved between these spheres, at times with more, at others with less, success. The Kaiser, that political creature by the grace of God, hovering over it all and interfering where he could, was like for many others in politics, intelligentsia and capital, someone to impress opinions upon, who could dictate policy. However, he had to be won over, he did not always agree, and when he was busy with something else or lost interest, the rest of the bureaucracy continued to run according to its own rules, hierarchies, power-struggles, sources of information and paradigms.

Rosen was elevated from relative obscurity under these conditions by Holstein and gained some confidence from Bülow, but after he expressed his opin-

den morgenländischer Kultur. Festschrift Max Freiherrn von Oppenheim zum 70. Geburtstage gewidmet von Freunden und Mitarbeitern, Ernst Friedrich Weidner (Berlin: Weidner, 1933), 89–92.

170 Rosen mentioned to Müller-Werth that he took out many critical comments on his diplomatic colleagues. Herbert Müller-Werth, Wenn ich zurückschaue. Lebenserinnerungen, manuscript, 1967, 3 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 5.

ions too firmly, Rosen was expelled from the inner circles of policy-making.¹⁷¹ Rosen's lengthy, well-crafted but also at times biting, pessimistic and know-all reports would be read in the centre with a measure of disdain. Diplomats were not necessarily intellectuals, and already Bismarck had been "verärger" (upset) by all the erudition Rosen's father had put on display in his equally long scholarly reports.¹⁷² Rosen's belief in a rapprochement with Britain was largely consistent with chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg's policies, but particularly with the growing influence of military considerations and as war became an all or nothing struggle of national survival, Rosen's diplomatic considerations and qualms were but pricks in the sides of those who were energised, fanaticised and legitimised by war.

Rosen had learned from his father, and saw to it that his career did not suffer from overly rash actions. It was no coincidence that Rosen never reached the rank of ambassador and was appointed foreign minister only in the Weimar Republic. While the Kaiser thought he would please his favourite Persian by sending him to Tehran, Rosen fought with all he had against being sent to Iran on realist grounds. The situation – likely indecisive to the outcome of the war either way – also betrayed Rosen's understanding of where a senior and where a junior German diplomat were to be found on the map, at a time when the most reputable positions for diplomatic representatives were in the five big European capitals.¹⁷³ The appeals to Rosen's patriotism, countered appropriately by Rosen with a rhetoric of being willing to sacrifice himself, also indicated that among noble diplomats like Kühlmann, it was seen as appropriate to have Rosen demoted at the age of 61 to Tehran. With the Orient expert image at this point detrimental, Rosen rhetorically fought off the knowledge-based approach to politics by emphasising the supremacy of military calculations.

Rosen had nevertheless used his Oriental(ist) knowledge and developed on it throughout his career, influencing both his diplomatic reports and his publications. Fittingly, Kühlmann, who had served in many of the same capitals as Rosen, noted that it had been this very Oriental knowledge that had sparked off his "not unremarkable career."¹⁷⁴ This diplomatic career was, however, at a disadvantage as Rosen's insufficient power-basis hampered his political manoeuvring in Germany. Not only was he merely a burgher, but he was a nomad, with connections everywhere and nowhere, and his relationships in academia often more profound than in politics. Considering the largely unpolitical

¹⁷¹ Friedrich Rosen, *Bukarest. Lissabon*, 259, 268.

¹⁷² Reisswitz, *Belgrad – Berlin*, 101.

¹⁷³ Osterhammel, *Verwandlung der Welt*, 716.

¹⁷⁴ Kühlmann, *Erinnerungen*, 180.

research agendas of most of Rosen's Orientalist friends, their input may have been useful, when they wrote news from an expedition to Kurdistan, but that happened rarely and their work on vowel changes in ancient languages was largely inconsequential for daily politics.

The label "Orientkenner" did make some people listen to him, but it could also be used against him as a one-track specialist. More harmful became likely that he was considered an Anglophile, with the influential journalist Maximilian Harden calling him "Sir Rosen", and a number of members of the Auswärtiges Amt suspecting him of Anglophilia, on account of his close relations with British ambassador Lascelles or thinking him untrustworthy because of his British wife Nina. For some, his close relations with the unpredictable Kaiser was equally reason for caution.¹⁷⁵ There had been an anti-Semitic incident in Moroccan days, but this appears not to have had any larger reverberations until the end of the war. Among his diplomatic cohorts, even those who would later on take on positions in the Nazi regime, like Schabinger von Schowingen, did not touch on the topic. Only malaria stricken Vassel mixed a portion of Jewification into his personal vilification of Rosen. But Vassel never reached a position of significant influence in the Auswärtiges Amt.¹⁷⁶

Rosen's aversion to conflict with England and other countries and his peace-nik profile would have mattered more. By advising against meddling in the Ottoman Empire, against military expectations of uprisings in Morocco, against counting on Pan-Islamic holy war, and against an ill-prepared attack on the Suez Canal, Rosen created for himself an image of a warner, interpretable as coward. In any case, Rosen's consultations were largely reactive and circumscribed policy options, rather than creating openings for active decision-making. Rosen was better at maintaining and building friendly relations with other governments and publics than at devising overarching schemes beyond a close alliance with Britain as a junior partner – and that was not enough for many in Germany at the time.

Another factor was that Rosen was ambitious. He did not want to get stuck in Jerusalem for ages and then go into retirement as general-consul in Belgrade like his father, and he knew that European posts were assigned more seniority and were imbued with more political space for manoeuvre than a place in the Oriental periphery. Holstein's fear of Rosen becoming understate secretary, while Rosen was in Morocco in 1907, was more testimony of Rosen exhausting

¹⁷⁵ Rich, Fisher, and Frauendienst, *Holstein 1897–1909*, 505.

¹⁷⁶ Rich, Fisher, and Frauendienst, *Holstein 1897–1909*, 459, 509–11; Kühlmann, *Erinnerungen*, 570; Schabinger von Schowingen, *Mosaiksplitter*, 37–54; Vassel, *Berlin und Marokko*, 87–97, 138.

his political capital (and himself) than it was indicative of the position the German envoy in Morocco generally held in German diplomatic circles. In his memoirs Rosen praised the Germanophile Lascelles as possessing “one quality that cannot be sufficiently appreciated. He was supremely lazy... Nobody does more harm to international relations than the bustling diplomat, and nobody gives more scope to suspicion and ill-feeling than the inquisitive busybody who tries to glean material for his reports from every conversation, and does not shrink from asking inopportune questions.”¹⁷⁷ Rosen knew how to not appear too inquisitive. But his bustling and opinionated nature made him assailable in a system of German diplomacy first dominated by the suspicious Holstein in his back-chamber diplomacy, then by colonialist circles pushing for expansion no matter what and finally by the military. Rosen’s Oriental-Orientalist charm worked on the Kaiser, and it was through the Kaiser that most of Rosen’s influence was exerted.

Belief, religious symbols and forms of organisation could in fact be used politically, something Rosen had witnessed in several instances throughout his career. Rosen himself ascribed crucial significance to religion in his reading of Rumi in Muslim societies. Through his understanding of Sufi orders and their transnational channels, and in the form of religious legitimacy drawn on by rulers in Muslim states for maintaining their power, Rosen perceived of differences and knew that religion was not a simple instrument employed at anyone’s fancy or replacing material realities like a gun. Out of this reading, no matter how simplistic, Rosen correctly understood holy war as a Pan-Islamic prospect to be used for the German war effort to be fictitious and advised against such a fantastical policy on a number of occasions. Rosen’s roundabout rejection of jihad was reaction to a European obsession he knew was not steeped in reality. In discarding the European Pan-Islam-Jihad myth, however, Rosen brushed over real forms of jihad. As such, it is fortunate that there is today a much broader academic understanding of the multiple meanings of jihad, even if still overshadowed by simplistic militant interpretations.

Rosen’s Orientalist endeavours spoke to his times and were not disinterested or objective. He was influenced by his interactions, discussions and observations in various places across “the Orient”, most prominently by Persian culture, language and history. Sufi Islam especially played a formative role in Rosen’s thought, at once a leisurely escape from the strictures of politics, intellectual endeavour, and object of scholarly analysis. In this mixture Sufi Islam also informed Rosen’s personal approach to politics. His overwriting of the decay of

177 Rich, Fisher, and Frauendienst, *Holstein 1897–1909*, 451.

the Islamic world linked to the Sufi philosophies he valued was simplistic, but explained by the impressions of all-domineering imperialism of the day, whether in Iran, in the Ottoman Empire or in Morocco. Muslim states were shrinking and on the brink of collapse. Syed Ameer Ali's rejoinder to the Pan-Islam-Jihad myth captured an unease over European style development and civilisational progress that Rosen shared:

I cannot overlook the fact that in the name of civilization and Western progress, a great deal has been done which has been most harmful to the healthy development of Mahomedan countries, and which has inspired those Mahomedan nations which still maintain their independence with distrust and distaste for European progress.¹⁷⁸

Putting himself outside of a European perspective, the places he had lived in were for him formed by their own "spirits". These living places had left a mark on him. Rosen treasured the Persian world for its culture, but he found cultures valuable wherever he was intellectually stimulated. This did not mean that Rosen loved it all in full, but as he centrally argued in the *Mesnevi* introduction, development would have to come from within, if it was to succeed. In removing from European imperialism the spiritual-intellectual high ground, whether in guises of "civilisation" or "Kultur", Rosen whittled at imperialism's legitimisation. What remained was the use of force and the lure of produce.

But Rosen did not pursue of "anti-imperial liberation from above", as Hanisch observed for Oppenheim.¹⁷⁹ Despite his fortunes in German foreign affairs changing, Rosen closely identified with the *Auswärtiges Amt* and the art of foreign policy and diplomacy. Rosen may culturally have been socialised in Jerusalem, in European Orientalist and in Iranian court circles, but politically he subscribed to the considerations of Realpolitik and imperialism was part of that game. Another part was nationalism, and Rosen's organicist, religious-legitimacy positions reflected forms of nationalism that he had come to encounter across the extra-European world – and of course in Germany. This was most apparent in his scholarly writings, but these dream worlds of thought and reflections were hedged in by realist considerations of power. Japan and Ethiopia could reconnect to a glorious past, because of a powerful presence, not vice-versa as the failure of revivalist movements across the Muslim world until this time had demonstrated. Yet, amid the cultural destruction European imperialism wrought upon societies in the Orient, Rosen perceived that such a form of organic development or revival was the only way forward. Rosen valued European culture and its ben-

178 Chirol, *Pan-Islamism*, 21.

179 M. Hanisch, "Anti-imperiale Befreiung".

efits, but he believed artificial impositions on entire cultures with their traditions, practices, rituals and orders disturbed and destroyed to be doomed to failure. Development should come from within, with foreign influences adapted to local conditions. After the war, with German foreign policy beyond Europe in shambles and “Oriental” countries fighting for their independence, retired Rosen developed more freely on these themes.

Chapter 8

Fall of the Eagle. Reformulations

1 Introduction

Auf hohem Fels breitet ein stolzer Aar
Zum Fluge aus sein mächtig Flügelpaar.
Er blickt auf seiner Schwingen starke Zier:
"Die ganze Welt", spricht er, "liegt unter mir!
Bald können mich die Menschen nicht mehr sehn,
Ich kann ein Haar am Meeresgrund erspähn.
Ich sehe, was auf Erden nur sich regt,
Wenn eine Mücke sich im Gras bewegt."
So rühmt er sich in seines Stolzes Glücke
Und denkt nicht an des Schicksalsrades Tücke.
Im Hintergrund war schon gespannt ein Bogen.
Wie das Verhängnis kommt auf ihn geflogen
Der Pfeil, der Herzdurchbohrer. Das Gefieder
Blutüberströmt, sinkt er zur Tiefe nieder.
Und wie ein Fisch am Land, der Angel Raub,
Zuckt an der Erde in des Weges Staub
Der Fürst der Lüfte: "Wer in aller Welt
Hat aus der Höhe mich so jäh gefällt?"
Er sieht den Pfeil aus Eisen und Holz gemacht:
"Wie hat's nur der zu solchem Flug gebracht?"
Da ruft er plötzlich: "Jetzt kann ich's verstehn!
Mit Adlerfedern war der Pfeil versehn!
Des Adlers Schwingen liehen Schwung dem Schaft.
Den Adler fällte erst des Adlers Kraft!
Dum über das, was meine Tage kürzte,
Klage ich nicht. – Von mir ist, was mich stürzte."
Nasir Khusraw in his *Diwan*. 11th century.¹

1 In Schimmel's translation: "One day an eagle rose up from his rock and, full of greed, spread all his plumage out, arranged his wings correctly and spoke thus: 'Today the world is all beneath my wings! If I fly high the sun no longer sees me, while I see dust specks in the ocean's depth; and should a gnat be crawling in the dust, my eye beholds the insect's movements too!' Thus he showed off, not fearing God's decree – What happened to him from the cruel sphere? For suddenly from out a hiding place an arrow came, shot from a mighty bow. The piercing arrow hit the eagle's wing and cast him from the cloud onto the dust. He wriggled in the dust just like a fish and all his plumage fell there left and right. 'How strange!' said he, 'this thing is steel and wood! How could it be so swift, so piercing sharp?' He looked and saw his feathers on the arrow and screamed: 'From me came what came over me!'" Friedrich Rosen, *Ende des Kaiserreichs. Weimar-*

With these lines by the eleventh century Isma'li philosopher-poet Nasir Khusraw Friedrich Rosen ends his recollections of receiving the abdicated German Kaiser Wilhelm II on the Belgian-Dutch border in November 1918. In his memoirs he noted that he had been given Khusraw's poem shortly before. The "mood", that receiving the fallen emperor struck the German envoy to the Netherlands, led him to translate the poem on the train-ride back to The Hague. The last lines of the original poem went missing in Rosen's translation. Hunsberger renders them as: "Cast all your arrogance and conceit aside, and see what befell that eagle full of selfish pride!"²

With the eagle symbol of Prussia and the German Reich, Khusraw's plummeting master of the skies was not only the Kaiser himself, but signalled the abrupt end of an era. Monarchy was abrogated. In came parliamentary democracy. Gone was Germany's empire, past its Weltpolitik, its wings clipped. Many German diplomats returned home to find their country in a state of Anglo-French beleaguerment that they had experienced in places across the Orient. The cognitive shocks, that the war and the turmoil of the emerging post-war order impressed on the larger population and foreign affairs hands like Rosen, went along with the quest for national self-determination that brought scores of anti-imperialists from across the extra-European world to Germany – now more than ever, occupied Germany looked like a natural anti-imperialist ally. While German Orientalists were no longer included in international forums of scholarship and lost access to their fields of inquiry, young "Orientals" of all disciplines streamed to the temples of German academia. Retiring from diplomacy after a short stint as German foreign minister in 1921, these were the conditions and contestations in which Rosen returned to Oriental studies and published the larger part of his oeuvre.

When Rosen wrote his memoirs in the mid-1920s, his disposition towards the republic had been a major point of contention. After it became known that he was about to be appointed foreign minister, Rosen was accused in the French press of having been Wilhelm's right-hand man and that he continued to be loyal to the abdicated Kaiser. German democrats, like Hellmut von Gerlach, also attacked Rosen for his supposed closeness to Wilhelm in his Dutch exile. Already shortly after the proclamation of the German republic, Rosen saw it fit to assure chancellor Friedrich Ebert of his loyalty to the republican government and his actions in the Netherlands between 1918 and 1921 would confirm his

er Republik, 225–26; Annemarie Schimmel, *Make a Shield from Wisdom. Selected Verses from Nāṣir-i Khusraw's Divān* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1993), 92–93.

² C. Alice Hunsberger, *Nasir Khusraw. The Ruby of Badakhshan: A Portrait of the Persian Poet, Traveller and Philosopher* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2000), 88–89.

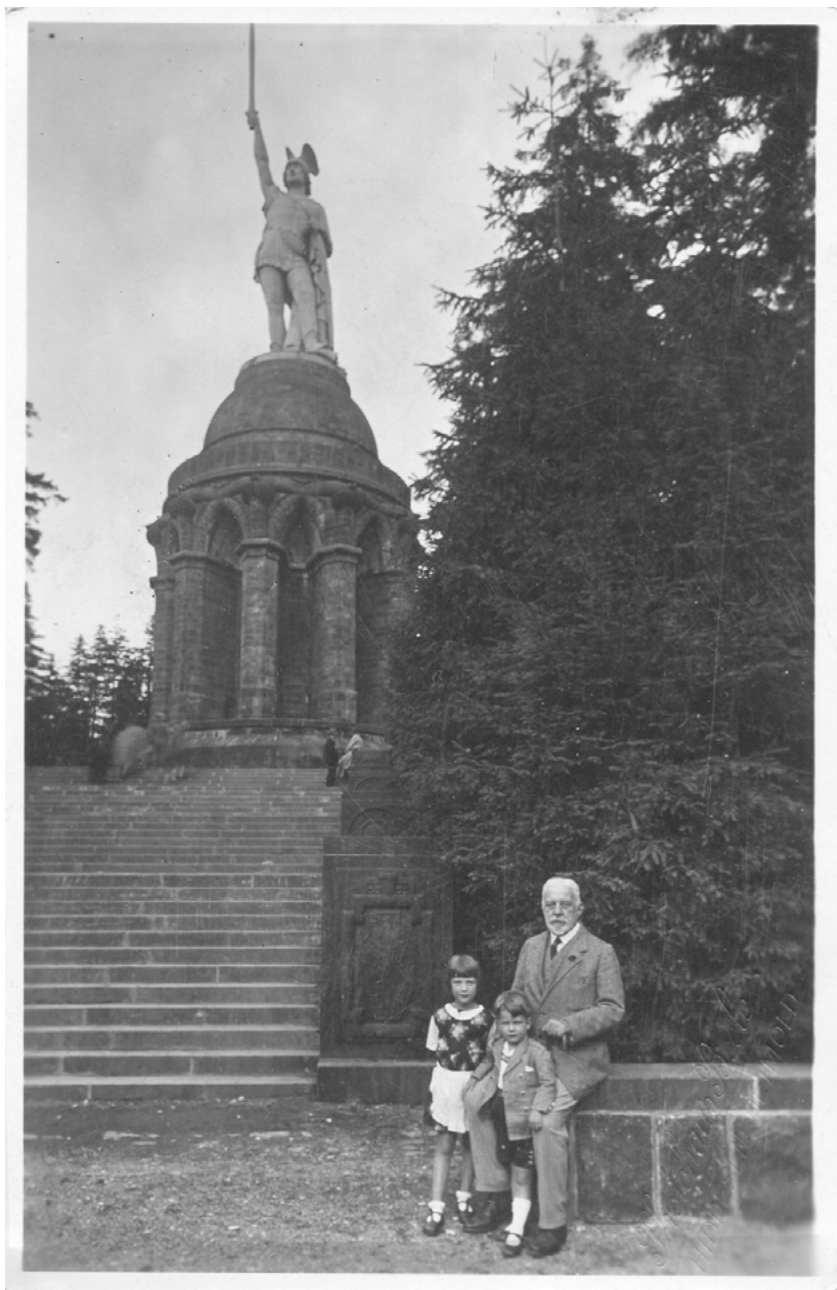


Fig. 8.1. Friedrich Rosen and his grandchildren Valentina and Friedrich at the Hermannsdenkmal near Detmold.

promise. In Rosen's unpublished German memoirs he noted that he was no royalist, but that he had believed the Kaiser to have been a "political necessity", a unifying figure to keep together the diverse German Reich together and this was not just a retrospective justification in response to Weimar era critics.³

The Prussian royal house had cultivated close ties with Germany's liberal burghers to offset the continuing influence of the nobility after Germany's unification and the Kaiser had been Rosen's long-time political protector. Yet, Rosen's loyalty and hesitance to outright criticise Wilhelm was not only born out of bourgeois or personal gratitude. Rather, Rosen refused to join into the choir of those who served up the Kaiser as a convenient scapegoat to deflect from their own failures. Too closely had he observed the faults of people like Holstein, Bülow and Ludendorff to accept roundabout attacks on Wilhelm and disputed the line pushed by the victorious Entente powers that Germany and its emperor were liable for the war alone.⁴ Before its collapse, the monarchy had not been a mere functional construct for Rosen and despite the long-standing burgher pride the Rosen family cultivated vis-a-vis the patricians of all nations, a republican alternative to the monarchy had seemed far off. Rosen diligently celebrated Kaiser's birthday in Tehran, Jerusalem and Ethiopia as a matter of course and perhaps similar to the sensation of Ulrich in Robert Musil's *Man without Qualities*, in the presence of the Wilhelm II, by the grace of God, Rosen may have "suddenly felt the radiance of a power that was mightier than him".⁵ His only recorded monarchy critical utterance from that time had been in reference to Voltaire, when he wrote to Nina in 1905 from Addis Ababa that the excavation rights for Aksum Menelik had granted would certainly be to the satisfaction of the "Roi de Prusse for whom I am working".⁶

For Müller-Werth, Rosen was simply a liberal, who would in the face of the hardship of the Weimar Republic come to espouse more left-leaning positions towards his later years. Despite clear conservative undertones, this was close to Rosen's self-definition and although he had not suffered from the censorship regime of the Kaiserreich, he valued the freedoms of expression that the democrat-

³ Friedrich Rosen, 1926, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte I*, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 59.

⁴ Friedrich Rosen to Friedrich Ebert, 17 November 1918, Solf, ASWPC; Marks, "Kaiser in Exile," 124–45; Herbert Müller-Werth, 3. Besuch beim Reichsaußenminister a.D. Dr. Friedrich Rosen, 4 August 1933, 2 NL Müller-Werth 1199/34, HHStAW.

⁵ Robert Musil, *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften. Erstes und Zweites Buch*, Adolf Frisé (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 2015), 83–84.

⁶ Friedrich Rosen to Nina Rosen, 15 March 1905, Briefe aus Abessinien, ASWPC; Clara Wasser, "L'expression: travailler pour le roi de Prusse," in *Karambolage 52 – Arte*. <https://sites.arte.tv/karambolage/fr/lexpression-travailler-pour-le-roi-de-prusse-karambolage>.

ic system of the Weimar Republic ushered in. When the NSDAP was voted into power in 1933, Rosen was outraged that the German people so willingly gave up its liberties, and thought that a nation as dumb as that had not deserved any better. When in the same year discussing Hans Kohn's *Nationalismus und Imperialismus im Vorderen Orient*, which called for more democratic participation in Turkey, Rosen noted drily, that as developments in Germany had shown, democracy might just not work.⁷

Rosen's perturbation stemmed in no little part from his personal experience in post-war German foreign affairs. Appointed non-partisan German foreign minister in the first cabinet of Joseph Wirth's coalition government of the Centre, Social-Democrat and Left-Liberal parties in May 1921, Rosen signed a peace agreement with the United States three months later. Rather than freeing Germany of its Versailles shackles or consolidating its position vis-a-vis the victorious western powers, as had been the expectation of the government, on 10 October of the same year, the League of Nations decided that Germany was to allow the cessation of predominantly Polish-speaking and resource rich eastern Upper Silesia to Poland, bringing down the government shortly after. The diplomat of the old guard Rosen had been unable to navigate the foreign policy waters of the post-secret diplomacy age. After having spent the better part of his thirty-one *Auswärtiges Amt* years abroad, he lacked the necessary political clout and understanding of internal politics in Germany's new democratic order and so his unlikely career spanning from lowly dragoman to foreign minister came to a sudden end.⁸ In response to a sympathetic letter from his old friend, Friedrich Carl Andreas, Rosen vented his frustration with the revanchist European powers and Berlin's political elite of "half-educated demagogues" who ignored the "factual and the finer connections of things" and only had the "crudely material or sensational" in mind. Coming to terms with the changing times and a life outside of politics, Rosen wrote that he was taking refuge in his "hālät-i dārwischī" – his derwish ecstasy.⁹ Rosen coped with his fall and the inequities of the new age

7 Müller-Werth, Wenn ich zurückschaue, 4; Müller-Werth, *Staatsmännisch denkender Diplomat*, 73; Müller-Werth, 3. Besuch bei Rosen, 4 August 1933, 2 NL Müller-Werth 1199/34, HHStAW; Hans Kohn, *Nationalismus und Imperialismus im Vorderen Orient* (Frankfurt: Societätsverlag, 1931); Friedrich Rosen, "Nationalismus und Imperialismus im Vorderen Orient," *Literaturblatt der Frankfurter Zeitung* 64/34 (23 August 1933).

8 Müller-Werth, Wenn ich zurückschaue, 4–5; Kaiser, *D'Abernon*, 208, 522; Friedrich Rosen, *Ende des Kaiserreichs. Weimarer Republik*, 312–408; von Bülow, *Weltkrieg und Zusammenbruch*, 9.

9 The literal translation would be "derwish states". Friedrich Rosen to F.C. Andreas, 18 November 1921, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG.

by seeking a state of ecstasy in union with God and looked forward to his scholarly pursuits.

By the fall of 1921, Rosen had not been in Iran for over twenty years, and his last posting to a country in which Sufism or derwish orders played a role – Morocco – had been eleven years prior. But his publication activities on “the Orient” would only now take on full swing. By the time democracy was abrogated in Germany, Rosen had wrapped up some twenty publications long and short, covering history, poetry, theatre, philosophy, philology, language instruction and politics, as well as his own German and English memories of the places he had come to know between India, the Middle East, the Horn of Africa, the Maghreb and Europe. A frequent point of return was Iran, or as it was then still called in his publications, Persia. The retired Orientalist-diplomat sought to explain one culture to another, translate knowledge and most importantly spread the understanding that he had seen lacking throughout his political career. Mostly, the direction of explanation was from the Persianate to the German or English speaking worlds. But there were also a number of instances in which Rosen published or supported the publication with a Persian or a transnational audience in mind. His message for a European audience was to value “the Orient” for what it was or was ceasing to be, with side notes of progress and empire admonishment. In facing a Persian audience he advocated the preservation and organic development of Iranian culture amid the onslaught of modernity and European ways.

The topics were wide ranging. By 1921 Rosen’s *Sinnsprüche* had run through its fourth edition, and persistent demand saw the Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt publish a fifth edition in 1922. Around the same time Rosen received a manuscript of over 300 arguably very old Omar Khayyam *Rubai’yat*, which he went on to edit and publish first in Persian in 1925 and then in English in 1930. Further works on Khayyam were an essay on the continuing question of whether the *Ruba’iyat* could be assumed to have really been written by the eleventh to twelfth century philosopher, and if so how many out of the corpus of over a thousand *Ruba’iyat*, or if they were all merely ascribed in the centuries following and were thus not authentic. Other scholarly publications in essay form dealt with an essay by Khayyam on metallic alloys, an intellectual history of Persia, a national history of Afghanistan, Urdu and Iranian theatre, the origins of wine in the Caucasus and a discussion of the poems by the pre-Islamic Arab poet Imru’ al-Qais. These works were complemented by a ethnographical picture book, *Persien in Wort und Bild*. Rosen also published more translated poetry: the eighth book of the *Gulistan* by thirteenth century Persian folk poet Sa’di, and a compilation of poems in different styles by various authors, Persian, Urdu, Hindi, Turkish, Arabic and Somali, under the name *Harut und Marut*. In 1926 Nina Rosen pub-

lished *Acht orientalische Weisen aus dem Munde des Volkes in Teheran und Fez* (eight Oriental tunes from the mouth of the people in Tehran and Fez), a collection of music sheets of songs that drew in part on Rosen's translations. In 1929 Rosen's rendering of the *Ruba'iyat* were picked up by the publishing house of canonical literature Insel-Verlag and his *Sinnsprüche* have since run through over a dozen editions, the latest appearing in 2017. The majority of the sources Rosen drew on for these Orientalist publications had been collected during his career as a diplomat.

His mindset was also shaped by his perception of an Orient that underwent drastic change under the impact of imperialism and the war. A few months before becoming foreign minister the Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft (DMG) appointed Rosen as its chairman and together with Carl-Heinrich Becker, as Ellinger notes, Rosen became crucial in "supporting the consolidation of post-war Orientalistik and its expansion".¹⁰ As much as the rest of German academia under immense financial pressure and often excluded from western international forums of discourse, German Orientalists were as ever dependent on access to sources through the British and French Empires. Still a household name in international Orientalism from before the war, German Orientalistik was only too glad to adorn itself with Rosen, and the engagement with post-war German Oriental studies equally left a mark on Rosen's Orientalist scholarship. As German scholars faced tough times, students, intellectuals and artists from "the Orient" flogged to 1920s Berlin. Just as much under the impressions of the war as Europeans, but with the view that European imperialism was no longer unimpeachable, these figures spanned the intellectual spectrum from fascism to nationalism, socialism, Islamism and spiritualism. While infusing their knowledge productions with the proliferating intellectual and cultural life of Weimar Germany, they brought "indigenous" perspectives into Oriental studies and other branches of German academia. In Berlin, many of these circles had initially been connected to the war time German propaganda Nachrichtenstelle für den Orient (NfdO). The community that Rosen came to interact with most were the Iranians around Berlin's Kaviani publishing house.¹¹ With his memories of a past Orient, Rosen moved between these two worlds of stifled German scholarship and surging nationalist Iranian knowledge seeking, drawing on their influences and writing for both.

10 "Aus gelehrten Gesellschaften"; "Vorstand und Arbeitsausschuß der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft," *ZDMG* 75 (1921): XIII – XIV; Littmann, "Rosen," 81; Ellinger, *Deutsche Orientalistik zur Zeit des Nationalsozialismus*, 28.

11 Epkenhans, *Iranische Moderne im Exil*, 51.

No longer constrained by the foreign affairs apparatus around him and political expediencies, the Weimar Republic was for Rosen an unprecedented period of intellectual freedom and economic well-being – Nina and he bought a house in Berlin-Willmersdorf in 1926. But Germany's political and social situation left him deeply distraught. “Vom Schlaf, vom Schlaf / Wach auf du deutsches Schaf! Sonst frisst dich deiner Feinde Schar – Ganz sicherlich mit Haut und Haar”, read the last stanza of a poem he penned. His non-Orientalist writings expressed disappointment with the unrelenting politics of Great Britain and France, while accusing the German powerholders during the war of distorting facts and “constructing legends”.¹² The gloom and doom of Weimar hardships also found an echo in Rosen's publications on Iran, the Levant and India. No longer moving in a power matrix of a belatedly ascending Germany facing disintegrating and imperially encroached Iran or other “Oriental” countries, the end of Wilhelmian Weltpolitik and the concurrent rise of nationalist movements across Asia and Africa, saw Germany, it seemed to many, on par with the disenfranchised peoples of the world. The news of wide-scale modernisation in post-war Iran, where Rosen never visited again, impressions from a last trip to devastated Constantinople in 1919 and encounters with young, creative Iranians in Berlin left Rosen struggling with reconciling the experiences of his past imperial life and a cantankerous nationalistic presence. Shifting between appraisals of Iranian progress, misgivings as to the disappearance of the original and profound in post-equestrian Iran, and declarations as to the need for Iran to preserve its own culture in the face of European imports, Rosen expanded on his advocacy of “organic” Iranian national development. As the conceit of European selfish pride was beginning to be cast aside, at least this looked more possible now.

2 Iranian Berlin

Rosen's cabinet colleague, the liberal minister of justice, Eugen Schiffer remembered in 1948 that Rosen's “Oriental studies surely stood in the foreground of his interest”, and that it was attractive to have Rosen at the dinner table reciting “little stories of Oriental origin with the voice of a derwish”. The *Berliner Tagesblatt* also noted on the occasion of Rosen's seventy-fifth birthday that Rosen liked to

¹² “Wake up from sleep, from sleep, you German sheep! – If not your flock of enemies will eat you most certainly with skin and hair.” Friedrich Rosen, *Das Schaf, das Schaf!*, 1920, poem, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen, *In letzter Stunde*, May 1925, unpublished article, ASWPC.

conclude a story with a “little amusing Oriental anecdote or a simile”. But not everybody liked Rosen’s tendency to draw on his well of “Oriental” wisdom. Critics claimed that he began every story with: “Once there was a cameleer, who trekked from Baghdad to Basra...”¹³ Reactions to the posthumous 1959 publication of volumes three and four of Rosen’s *Diplomatisches Wanderleben* in Germany mirrored this prejudice. Rosen was described as being “different”, “a stranger in the post-war period”, “a heretic”, and defined by “Oriental fatalism”.¹⁴

The view from Tehran was different. Reminiscing over his student years in 1920s Berlin some fifty years later, Ahmad Farzine recounted his memories of Rosen to the German language Tehran newspaper *Die Post*:

Der alte Herr war von hoher, aufrechter Gestalt und trug gern ein langes, etwas altmodisches Cape. Farzine, der das Ehepaar Rosen sehr bewunderte und verehrte, war oft in dessen Haus in der Kaiserin-Augusta-Straße zum Tee eingeladen. Wie auch andere Iraner hatte er bei diesen Besuchen stets das Gefühl „daheim“ zu sein, das heißt, in echt persischer Atmosphäre.

Visitors were served tea, Nina and her kitchen aids prepared Iranian dishes, in one of the rooms of the Rosen house was an Iranian-style mihrab (praying corner), and the elderly Rosens enjoyed the company of young Iranian students, whose native tongue and culture they celebrated.¹⁵ As Farzine recalled, Iranian students visited the Rosen home frequently, and the Rosens also helped organise a Persian culture exhibition on up-scale Friedrichstraße in 1928. Aminullah Hossein aka André Hossein and an orchestra played “folkloristic music”, the last Prussian crown prince Wilhelm and other grandees of Berlin’s high society dropped by and the Rosens mingled with Iranians and discussed Persian poetry. Like the by Berlin’s high society well-frequented “Türkenbälle” (Turkish balls), the

13 Eugen Schiffer to Herbert Müller-Werth, 6 September 1948, 12 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA; “Zum 75. Geburtstag,” *Berliner Tageblatt*, 27 November 1931; Blücher, *Zeitenwende*, 144.

14 Paul Herre, “Ein diplomatisches Wanderleben Bd. 3/4,” *Historische Zeitschrift* 192, no. 3 (Juni 1961): 677; Erich Dombrowski, “Ein Diplomat schüttet sein Herz aus,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 7 April 1960; “Memoiren eines Ketzers,” *Die Welt*, 12 September 1959; Helmut Lindemann, *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, 3 December 1959; Herbert Müller-Werth, *Besprechungen Diplomatisches Wanderleben*, 1959/1960, ASWPC.

15 “The old gentleman was of high, erect stature and liked to wear a long, somewhat outmoded cape. Farzine, who very much adored and admired the Rosen couple, was often invited for tea to their house in Kaiserin-Augusta-Straße. Like other Iranians he always felt during these visits like he was “home”, that is, in real Persian atmosphere.” von Urff, “Friedrich Rosen,” 4.

events organised by the Persian community took on a leading role in Berlin's interwar cultural life.¹⁶

Farzine and Hossein belonged to a cohort of around a hundred mostly young Iranians living in Germany at the time. About half of them resided in Berlin. During the war, the *Auswärtiges Amt* had through its intensified propaganda and cultural engagement with the Islamic world drawn political activists from the Ottoman Empire, Egypt, and Iran to work for the NfdO. Most famous among the Iranian exiles around the *Komita-ye Melliyun-e Irani dar Berlan* (Iranian Nationalist Committee of Berlin / *Persisches Komite*) were Sayyed Hassan Taqizadeh, a modernist-nationalist and previous collaborator of Edward Granville Browne in Cambridge, and Hossein Kazemzadeh, a modernist who witnessed the Armenian Genocide and later on became a belletrist and spiritualist.

During the war and in the immediate post-war period Taqizadeh produced the Persian language journal *Kaveh*, named after the legendary blacksmith who aroused the Iranian people into rebellion against the demonic tyrant Zahhak. A sketch of Kaveh raising the banner of revolution figured on the head of the newspaper.¹⁷ Like a number of Arabic and Turkish newspapers published in Berlin and distributed in the Middle East and beyond with the support of the *Auswärtiges Amt*, the war-time *Kaveh* was fervently anti-British and anti-Russian and positioned Germany as a fair partner of the Islamic world in its fight for justice and against imperialism. At first toying with Pan-Islam in alignment with the German-Ottoman policy of revolutionising the Islamic world, *Kaveh* soon moved in an Iranian nationalist direction.¹⁸ After the war and the loss of financial support by the German foreign ministry, the message of *Kaveh* developed into hyper-modernism, Taqizadeh propagating "complete surrender" to westernisation with the exception of the Persian language, which should be cleansed of its foreign influences Turkish and Arabic.

In 1918, Taqizadeh and a number of German Orientalists, diplomats and businessmen with an interest in Persia established the *Deutsch-Persische Gesellschaft*, which became together with the *Persisches Komite* an important vehicle for young Iranians seeking to study in Germany in the post-war period. The war

16 von Urff, "Friedrich Rosen," 5; Iraj Khademi, "Hossein, André," *Encyclopædia Iranica* XII, no. 5 (2012): 522; Mangold-Will, *Begrenzte Freundschaft*; Blücher, *Zeitenwende*, 142.

17 Epkenhans, *Iranische Moderne im Exil*, 27; Mansour Bonakdarian, "Iranian Constitutional Exiles and British Foreign-Policy Dissenters, 1908–9," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 27, no. 2 (1995): 176; Itscherenska, "Heydar Hân, Iraj Afšâr, "Kâva Newspaper," *Encyclopædia Iranica* XVI, no. 2 (2013): 132–35; Mahmud Omidzalar, "Kâva," *Encyclopædia Iranica* XVI, no. 2 (2013): 130–32; Ghahari, *Intellektuelle Kreise*, 163–67.

18 Ghahari, *Intellektuelle Kreise*, 117–20; Epkenhans, *Iranische Moderne im Exil*.

may have been lost and military salvation could no longer be expected from the Germans, but it could still help with the revival of the Iranian spirit for, as Taqizadeh wrote in *Kaveh* in 1921, Germany remained the “Kaaba of science”. The Auswärtiges Amt supported this educational exchange as a possibility to maintain at least some relations with Persia amid Germany’s rapidly diminishing projection of power abroad.¹⁹

After *Kaveh* closed due to lack of finances in the hyperinflation years, a similar circle of intellectuals, now around Taqizadeh’s friend Hossein Kazemzadeh, published *Iranshahr* in the mid-1920s.²⁰ As the title *Iranshahr*, the name of Iran in the Sasanian era, suggested, the newspaper put an emphasis on Iran’s purportedly glorious pre-Islamic past and became racialised, but under the impact of the perennial crisis ridden Weimar Republic and echoing Oswald Spengler’s *Untergang des Abendlandes*, *Iranshahr* dealt more with Eastern spirituality and theosophy. Rejecting pure materialism and secular rationality, *Iranshahr* advocated for nation-building through education, reminiscent of the German Bildungsideal.²¹ In a break from an unbridled belief in Western civilisation, a new Iran needed to be created through “a cultural and spiritual revolution”. The study of the occident (gharbshenasi) was to allow an identification of which European elements should be rejected and which could be combined with Eastern elements, finding synthesis in a “philosophy of Unitarianism (Tawhid)” that would constitute the new “Iranian spirit”, as Matin-Asgari noted.²²

During the war *Kaveh* and its Arabic and Turkish sister propaganda newspapers were printed by the German state under the cover of the shell publisher Kaviani, the name deriving from the Derafsh Kaviani, the legendary banner carried by the Sasanian kings.²³ After the war emerging as an independent publishing house run by a cluster of Iranian exiles and political activists, Kaviani came

19 Epkenhans, *Iranische Moderne im Exil*, 203; Sayyed Hassan Taqizadeh, Bericht Persisches Komitee, 30 October 1918, A 46483, R 19017, PA AA; Sayyed Hassan Taqizadeh to AA, 28 November 1917, A 39922, R 19017, PA AA; Afshin Matin-Asgari, “The Berlin Circle: Iranian Nationalism Meets German Countermodernity,” in *Rethinking Iranian Nationalism and Modernity*, Kamran Scot Aghaie and Afshin Marashi (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014), 58; Oliver Bast, “Germany i. German-Persian Diplomatic Relations,” *Encyclopædia Iranica* X, no. 5 (2001): 506–19; Alsulami, “Iranian Journals in Berlin,” 161–62.

20 Höpp, *Arabische und islamische Periodika*; Matin-Asgari, “Berlin Circle,” 58.

21 Epkenhans, *Iranische Moderne im Exil*, 43; Jamshid Behnam, “Irānšāhr, Hosayn Kāzemzāda,” *Encyclopædia Iranica* XIII, no. 5 (2012): 537–39; Matin-Asgari, “Berlin Circle,” 58–60.

22 Matin-Asgari, “Berlin Circle,” 61; Ghahari, *Intellektuellen Kreise*, 163–67; Hamid Dabashi, *Theology of Discontent: The Ideological Foundations of the Islamic Revolution in Iran* (New York: New York University Press, 1993), 46–48.

23 Höpp, *Arabische und islamische Periodika*, 25–29; Epkenhans, *Iranische Moderne im Exil*, 54.

under attack from the British foreign ministry for its distribution of publications across the Eastern Hemisphere. Kaviani's network distributed book and newspapers in eight cities in Iran, in Azerbaijan, in Bombay and Aligarh in India, Cairo, Istanbul and with the Orientalist publishers Luzac & Co in London and several other cities in Europe.²⁴ The defence of Kaviani against British accusations was led by Browne in Cambridge, who testified that the publishing house stood on firmly academic grounds, as its books were used at Cambridge and the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, and emphasised that it was "financed and managed by Persians desirous of producing good and cheap books". The British troublemaker Browne saw post-war Berlin as "one of the chief centres of Persian intellectual progress". *Kaveh* could already point to such respectable contributors as Browne himself, Wilhelm Geiger, Oskar Mann, Arthur Christensen, Georg Brandes and Eugen Mittwoch, not to mention Iranian figures such as writer Mohammed Qazvini and later prime minister Mohammad Foroughi.²⁵

Kaviani survived British objections. Formalised into a limited liabilities company by Mirza Abdul Shakur, Kaviani expanded its publications portfolio and by the early 1920s was publishing literature and scholarly monographs in Persian, Arabic, German, English and French.²⁶ Kaviani benefitted from the in European comparison cheap printing costs and the ready availability of print types in Berlin, in attracting a number of co-publications with the British and Dutch Orientalist publishers Luzac and Brill, but some readers of Kaviani publications, like the Iranist Hans Heinrich Schaeder, complained of "unfortunately very faulty printing".²⁷ Next to republications of old books and manuscripts in the vein of

24 Blücher, *Zeitenwende*, 143; The "Kaviani" Art Printing Press, *List of Publications & Books for Sale* (Berlin: Kaviani, 1921); The "Kaviani" Art Printing Press, *List of Publications & Books for Sale* (Berlin: Kaviani, 1924); Höpp, *Arabische und islamische Periodika*, 29; Fariba Adelkhah, *Les mille et une frontières de l'Iran: Quand les voyages forment la nation* (Paris: Karthala, 2012), 106.

25 Edward Granville Browne, "Publications of the 'Kaviani' Press, Berlin," *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 2 (April 1924): 279; Epkenhans, *Iranische Moderne im Exil*, 138–75; Tim Epkenhans, *Moral und Disziplin. Seyyed Hasan Taqizade und die Konstruktion eines "progressiven Selbst" in der frühen iranischen Moderne* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 2005).

26 Kamran Arjomand, "Die Buch- und Kunstdruckerei Kaviani und die iranischen Intellektuellen in Berlin um die Zeit des Ersten Weltkrieges," in *Fremde Erfahrungen: Asiaten und Afrikaner in Deutschland, Österreich und in der Schweiz bis 1945*, Gerhard Höpp (Berlin: Das Arabische Buch, 1996), 169–84; Matin-Asgari, "The Berlin Circle," 54.

27 Hans Heinrich Schaeder, "Henri Massé, Essai sur le poète Saadi. Thèse pour le doctorat lettres présentée à la faculté des lettres d'Alger. Paris 1919. 272 S.8," *Der Islam* 14, no. 1–2 (January 1924): 186; "Deutscher Orientalistentag München. Bericht über die Vorträge in den Sektionen," *ZDMG* 78 (3) (1924): LXXVII; Ernst Herzfeld to E.G. Browne, 13 November 1922, 9, Browne Papers (8–14), CUL Manuscripts.

prior Orientalist studies, often supplied by European scholars or Berlin's Prussian State Library (Nasir Khusraw's *Safarnameh*, *Zadul-Musafirin* and *Wajhi-Din*, Sa'di's *Gulistan* and the autobiography of Safavid Shah Tahmasp I), publications included a pocket edition of the Quran, Persian novels, natural sciences textbooks for secondary schools, treatises on physics and chemistry, a construction guide for wireless telegraphy, comparative Persian and European musical notes and instructional essays on hygiene and farming. The in Punjab originating Berlin-based modernist Ahmadija-Bewegung with its Taj Mahal inspired mosque in Wilmsdorf published an introduction to its teachings with Kaviani and a number of doctoral dissertations on contemporary social, political and economic topics by Iranian students at the universities Giessen and Lausanne were also published through the Kaviani press – among them a study on Iran's financial system by Abbas Khan Qajar Alamir, the son of former Persian envoy to Berlin and friend of Rosen Ehtesham es-Saltaneh.²⁸

Kaveh and *Iranshahr* were published out of an office in Berlin's affluent Charlottenburg district on Leibnizstraße 64, which also served as the office for Persisches Komitee, and the student exchange office. Rosen did not write for *Kaveh* or *Iranshahr*, as many of his Orientalist colleagues did, nor does he appear to have been in significant contact with Taqizadeh or Kazemzadeh, despite becoming honorary member of the Deutsch-Persische Gesellschaft in the early 1920s.²⁹ Rosen became, however, closely involved with the Kaviani Art Printing Press set up by Shakur on the other side of the street at Leibnizstraße 43. There, Reza Mirza Tarbiyat, editor and sometime contributor to *Kaveh*, published his *Deutsch-Persisches Taschen-Wörterbuch* of which he gave a dedicated copy to Rosen, in recognition of Rosen's Persian study books. Tarbiyat was another erst-while collaborator of Browne in Cambridge, a member of the Iranian parliament, mayor of Tabriz and recognised educator – hence the name "Tarbiyat". Tarbiyat's

28 The "Kaviani" Art Printing Press, *List of Publications & Books for Sale*; Abbas Khan Kadjari Alamir, *Das Finanzwesen Persiens. Ein geschichtlicher Abriss von der ältesten Zeit bis zur Persischen Verfassung* (Berlin: Kaviani, 1924); Mahmoud Afschar, *La politique européenne en Perse. Quelques pages de l'histoire diplomatique*, 2 (Téhéran [Berlin]: University of Teheran [Kaviani], 1973); Mobarak Ali, *Ahmadija-Bewegung oder Reiner Islam* (Berlin: Kaviani, 1924); Gerdien Jonker, "The Dynamics of Adaptive Globalisation. Muslim Missionaries in Weimar Berlin," *Entangled Religions* 1 (2014): 115–58; Gerdien Jonker, *The Ahmadiyya Quest for Religious Progress. Missionizing Europe 1900–1965* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 73, 80; Britta Richter, "Islam im Deutschland der Zwischenkriegsjahre," *Zeitschrift für Türkeistudien* 2 (1996): 257–66; Arjomand, "Kaviani," 174–77; Jalali, *Erani in Berlin*, 65–68.

29 Sayyed Hassan Taqizadeh to AA, 28 November 1917, A 39922, R 19017, PA AA; Sayyed Hassan Taqizadeh, Bericht Persisches Komitee, 30 October 1918, A 46483, R 19017, PA AA; Paraphe, Bericht 70. Geburtstag Rosen, 13 August 1926, Personalakten 12574, PA AA.

work with 30,000 entries filled the lacuna of a proper German-Persian dictionary that Paul Horn, Rosen, Browne and other Iranists had found to be an “empfindlicher Verlust” (considerable loss) at the turn of the century. Signalling a departure of dictionary writing merely from the side of the Europeans for their studies or activities in the East, the dictionary was intended to serve both Iranian students in Germany and Germans involved with Iran.³⁰

The architect and miniature painter Hossein Tahirzadeh Behzad, a collaborator of Kazemzadeh in the running of *Iranshahr*, tried to intrigue Rosen in publishing works on Sa’di and Khayyam with his illustrations at the Kaviani press, which came, however, only to fruition in a bilingual illustrated edition in the 1970s.³¹ Another Rosen acquaintance who contributed to *Iranshahr* and had been a war-time member of the Persisches Komitee was Ebrahim Pourdavoud. Pourdavoud saw the restoration of Iranian greatness dependant on its abandonment of Islam and return to the religion of “our valiant and truthful ancestors”, the Zoroastrians. Drawing on Christian Bartholomae’s and Friedrich Carl Andreas’ studies of ancient Iran, Pourdavoud began to translate the Avesta to new Persian and popularized pre-Islamic history and culture in Iran. His 1925 Bombay publication *Iranshah* narrated the history of Iranian Zoroastrian emigration to India, due to the Arab invasion, and included a number of images of prominent Indian Zoroastrians, including the Tata family and its industries. Pourdavoud gave a copy of the *Iranshah* as a present to Rosen on the occasion of his seventieth birthday in 1926.³²

Rosen worked most closely with Mahmud Ghanizadeh and Taqi Erani. Ghanizadeh, a Germanophile poet from Salmas in Northern Iran, was the editor of Kaviani’s early 1920s Khayyam and Nasir Khusraw editions, published a collection of Iranian fairy tales for children and contributed with folkloristic poetry to Kazemzadeh’s *Iranshahr*.³³ Of Azeri origin like Tarbiyat and Ghanizadeh Taqi Erani (1903–1940), the later socialist figurehead of the Iranian Tudeh party, Erani had come to Berlin in 1922 on an Iranian state scholarship to study chemis-

30 Mirza Reza Khan Tarbiat, *Deutsch-Persisches Taschen-Wörterbuch* (Berlin: Kunst- und Buchdruckerei “Kaviani”, 1923); Afšār, “Kāva Newspaper”; Edward Browne and Mirza Muhammad ‘Ali Khan “Tarbiyat” of Tabriz, *The Press and Poetry of Modern Persia*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1914), XII, 1–6; Browne, *Literary History. Firdawsi to Sa’di*, 495; Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 74.

31 Hossein Tahirzadeh Behzad to Friedrich Rosen, 3 August 1926, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Cyrus Ghani, *Iran and the West. A Critical Biography* (London: Routledge, 2009), 573.

32 Mary Boyce, *Zoroastrians. Their Religious Beliefs and Practices* (London: Routledge, 2001), 220; Ghahari, *Intellektuellen Kreise*, 156; Ebrahim Pourdavoud, *Iranshah [in Persian]* (Bombay: Anjoman-e Zartoshian Irani Bombay, 1925), 24.

33 Ghahari, *Intellektuellen Kreise*, 72; Arjomand, “Kaviani,” 177.

try, mathematics and philosophy. Like many Iranian students in Berlin Erani held Iranian nationalist-chauvinist ideas when he first arrived in Germany, advocating an anti-Arab and anti-Islam line and wanted to cleanse the Iranian language from Turkish and Arabic influences. Through his experience of German society during the Weimar Republic and studying at Berlin University with a number of Jewish chemists, Erani shed these tendencies and in later years attracted the ire of his Pahlavi adversaries for his condemnation and ridicule of the Aryan myth and Nazi ideologist Alfred Rosenberg. With the bookstore of the head of the first Young Communist International and KPD activist Willi Münzenberg in the same building, Erani grew more interested in social-democratic and socialist ideas instead, studying Marx, Engels, Hegel and Lenin.³⁴

Like Ghanizadeh, Erani was moonlighting as an editor and proofreader of Kaviani's publications in his spare time, and moved to a flat in walking distance on Fasanenstraße 22. Erani contributed articles to Kazemzadeh's *Iranshahr*, worked with the British Orientalist Lucas White King on publishing *Badāyi'*. *The Odes of Sheikh Muslihud-Din Sa'di Shirazi*, focused in essays on such topics as "materialist dialectics", "free will and determinism" and a number of matters pertaining to physics, chemistry and biology, and published a number of pamphlets on the medieval poets Sa'di, Khayyam and Nasir Khusraw to assemble "a vista of the intellectual landscape of this period". The parallel interests of Ghanizadeh, Erani and Rosen in the Sa'di, Khayyam and Khusraw connected the three men, and as Jalali noted, it was "in the midst of this project that [Erani] stumbled upon Rosen."³⁵ Erani and Rosen worked together most closely in 1925, which saw not only Rosen's first publication of the *Ruba'iyat* in Persian, but also Rosen's translation of Khayyam's mathematical work on gold and silver alloys – with Erani's knowledge of the natural sciences coming in handy. After Rosen's death Erani related that his "old friend" supplied him with copies of Khayyam's manuscripts from his own collection, and a copy of Khayyam's geometrical *Explanation of the Difficulties in the Postulates of Euclid*, which Rosen received from the library of the university of Leiden. Fittingly, Rosen had first become aware of the manuscript when he visited Leiden as German envoy in 1920 to attend a lecture, titled "Raum und Zeit in der neueren Physik" (space and

34 Jamshid Behnam, *Berlaniha. Andishmandan Irani dar Berlin. 1915–1930 [in Persian]* (Tehran: Farzan, August 2007), 70–71; Adelpkhah, *Mille et une frontières de l'Iran*, 63; Abrahamian, *Two Revolutions*, 157–62; E. Abrahamian and B. Alavi, "Arānī, Taqī," *Encyclopædia Iranica* II, no. 3 (2011); Jalali, *Erani in Berlin*, 35–46, 240.

35 Abrahamian and Alavi, "Arānī, Taqī"; Lucas White King and Taqi Arani, *Badāyi'*. *The Odes of Sheikh Muslihud-Din Sa'di Shirazi* (Berlin: Kaviani, 1926); Ghahari, *Intellektuellen*, 159; Taqi Arani, *Athār wa Maqālāt [in Persian]* (Cologne: Pahl-Rugenstein, 1977); Jalali, *Erani in Berlin*, 86.

time in recent physics), by Albert Einstein about his theory of relativity.³⁶ Erani worked on transcribing and introducing the Arabic manuscript at Berlin's Staatsbibliothek, where he left his work behind, when he saw himself forced to leave Berlin due to his anti-Pahlavi activism and return to Iran in 1928. Erani returned to Berlin shortly in 1934/5, when he took the transcribed manuscript back with him to Tehran where he published his edition two months after Rosen's death under the title *Discussion of Difficulties of Euclid by Omar Khayyam*. "Alas as this work dawns, he has eclipsed", he commemorated his "old friend". As Jalali suggests, the retired diplomat Rosen served as a security option for Erani and was in the loop as to Erani's political activism. And Rosen had reason to offer his support to the young Iranian scientist: "Taghi Erani was perhaps the closest Rosen had to his image of an ideal partner... familiar with medieval Persia and Khayyam and well-versed in Arabic."³⁷

With Erani and Ghanizadeh in tow, Rosen set to work on his first publication in Persian, a rendering of the *Ruba'iyat [by] Hakim 'Omar Khayyam*. First published with Kaviani in 1925, and then in a collaborative Persian-English publication with Luzac in London in 1930, these 329 *Ruab'iyat* were largely based on a manuscript the liberal member of the Reichstag, salonnière and women's activist Katharina von Kardorff-Oheimb had given to Rosen when he was still foreign minister. Rosen believed that it was possibly the oldest large collection of Khayyami *Ruba'iyat* dating from the fifteenth century and Edward Denison Ross, involved in the 1930 edition, of the School of Oriental Studies in London agreed.³⁸ In an article Rosen published in 1926 on the "Textfrage der Vierzeiler",

36 'Umar b. Ibrahim al-Khayyami, *Risāla fī sharḥ mā ashkala min muṣādarāt kitāb Uqlīdis* [in Arabic], 1218/1219 [615 AH], 75a–100b, Leiden codex Or. 199 (8), UBL; Arjomand, "Kaviani," 178; Jalali, *Erani in Berlin*, 87; Diana Kormos Buchwald, et al., *The Berlin Years: Correspondence May–December 1920 / Supplementary Correspondence 1909–1920*, The Collected Papers of Albert Einstein (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 267–68.

37 Taqi Arani, *Discussion of Difficulties of Euclid by Omar Khayyam* (Tehran: Sirousse, 1936), I–V; Friedrich Rosen, "Ein wissenschaftlicher Aufsatz 'Umar-i Khayyāms,'" *ZDMG* 79 (1925): 133–35; Mohammad Bagheri, "Between Tavern and Madrasa: 'Umar Khayyām the Scientist," in *The Great 'Umar Khayyām. A Global Reception of the Rubā'iyāt*, A.A. Seyed-Gohrab (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2012), 69; Abrahamian and Alavi, "Arāni, Taqī"; Jalali, *Erani in Berlin*, 88, 98, 140–41, 213.

38 Friedrich Rosen, ed., *Ruba'iyat Hakim 'Omar Khayyam [in Persian]* (Berlin: Kaviani, 1925); Friedrich Rosen, *The Quatrains of 'Omar-i-Khayyām. Persian Text Taken from the Two Newly Discovered Oldest Manuscripts with an English Prose Version* (London / Berlin: Luzac & Co / Kaviani, 1930), V; Cornelia Baddack, *Katharina von Kardorff-Oheimb (1879–1962) in der Weimarer Republik. Unternehmerin, Reichstagsabgeordnete, Vereinsgründerin, politische Salonnière und Publizistin* (Göttingen: V&R unipress, 2016), 18, 72–73, 132–33; Arthur Christensen, *Brevkopibog 1925*, I 1 Utilg. 578, KB – HA.

he argued that more authenticity could be established by relating Khayyam's mathematical-philosophical treatise to a cross-examination of the spirit of the contents of single quatrains. For this labour comprehensive, old manuscripts such as that of Kardorff-Oheimb were just as valuable as a newly acquired manuscript of Khayyam's *Nauruz Nameh* in the Prussian State Library, which the chief librarian Gotthold Weil supplied, and further copies of *Ruba'iyat* manuscripts that Mohammad Qazvini, another figure in the Kaviani world of Iranian Berlin, had made for him in Paris.³⁹ Rosen had also reconnected with his earlier sparring partner Arthur Christensen. Christensen had at the time been working on a larger analysis of the question of authenticity of the *Ruba'iyat* and was intrigued by Rosen's new project but advised him to give up on finding out more about the authentic quatrains, as he had come to learn that this widespread obsession led nowhere.⁴⁰ Despite this transnational collaboration and the praise the "attractive" Kaviani publication received from the Hamburg based Nedjati Hüssni, the old age of the Oheimb-Kardorff manuscript was quickly disputed. Instead of originating from the fifteenth century, the manuscript was placed in the sixteenth or seventeenth century.⁴¹

Rosen's Khayyam of the 1920s had become a multifaceted figure, a mathematician, a philosopher, a poet and a locus of intellectual exchange, bringing together individuals of differing predilections from Iran, Denmark, England and Germany. Whoever between Ghanizadeh, Tarbiyat, Erani and Qazvini suggested to Rosen that he publish a version of the *Ruba'iyat* [*Ruba'iyat*] in Persian probably also encouraged him to share more material from his collection. In 1922 Rosen had a manuscript of three Persian dramas attributed to former Persian envoy in London and liberal reformer Mirza Malkom Khan published with Kaviani. Rosen had stated that the pieces were based on a manuscript "from the pen of the former Persian ambassador in London, prince Mirza Malkom Khan" and that

39 Friedrich Rosen, "Zur Textfrage der Vierzeiler Omar's des Zeltmachers (Rubā'īāt-i-'Umar-i-Khayyām)," *ZDMG* 80, no. 4 (1926): 300; *Orientalische Handschriften Zugangsbuch*, *Orientalische Abteilung*, 1919–95, StaBiB; Friedrich Rosen, *Ruba'iyat*; Friedrich Rosen, *Quatrains*, 5.

40 Friedrich Rosen, *Quatrains*; Friedrich Rosen, *The Quatrains of 'Omar Khayyām. Newly Translated with an Introduction by Friedrich Rosen. With 8 Illustrations.* (London: Methuen & Co, 1930); Rustom Pestonji Bhajiwalla, ed., Jivanji Jamshedji Modi, *Maulana Shibli & Umar Khayyam* (Surat: I.P Mission Press, 1932), 61.

41 Nedjati Hüssni, "Ruba'ijat-i ḥakīm 'Omar Ḥaijām bā muqaddime-i rāḡi' be-eš'ār we šerḥ-i ḥāl ḥakīm ez Dr. Friedrich Rosen. Berlin: Kawiani 'Naurūz-i sāl 1304 hiḡri šemsi'," *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung* 12 (1927): 1112–13; C.N.S., "Review: The Quatrains of 'Omar-i-Khayyam by Friedrich Rosen," *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 2 (1931): 457–59.

it was at the prince's behest that he had them published.⁴² Browne had noted in the fourth volume of his *Literary History* that the three pieces in Rosen's possession had been printed in excerpts in the Tabrizi newspaper *Ittihad* in 1908, and that these three dramas set in the early nineteenth century were "all the Persian plays I have met with. All are comedies, and all are satires on the administrative or social conditions of Persia."⁴³ Malkom Khan had died in 1908, and Algar has since cast doubt on the originator of the plays having been Malkom Khan. Algar suggested that they were written by Akhundzadeh in Azeri and later translated freely to Persian by the Qajar prince Jalal ed-Din Mirza, but it has since been proven by Ibrahimov and Mämmädzadä from Baku that the author was Mirza Aqa Tabrizi. As Algar observed, in Rosen's publications there is no trace of interaction with Malkom Khan, and a review of Rosen's private collection corroborates Algar's estimation.⁴⁴ In other words, from wherever Rosen received the manuscript, he had been duped as to its penmanship. Fitting the call of the times, though, the publication was a contribution to portraying Iran in a modernist light, with a developing theatre form of social and political criticism.

In a similar way Rosen's collection of photographs from 1890s Iran must have sparked an interest with the Kaviani editors, resulting in the production of a several dozen postcards with captions in French and Persian for the Iranian tourist market. Most of the postcards showed images that were generic, scenic images of cities or landscapes, displaying country and people for people abroad. The only quasi-political motive the postcards depicted was Naser ed-Din Shah and Amin as-Sultan on a hunting expedition.⁴⁵ In contrast to the super-modernist politics of Reza Shah Pahlavi and the celebration of pre-Islamic antiquity, generally the postcards depicted the Iran of the Qajar period and motives and figures of what Rosen perceived to be pre-modern Iran were prominent. As was the case in his ethnographic picture book *Persien in Wort und Bild* that drew on many of the same photographs, he intended to:

[E]in Bild des Landes zu geben, wie es bis zum Einbruch der neuen Zeit, d. h. bis vor wenigen Jahren gewesen... Nach dem Vorbilde des Abendlandes wird alles gleichgemacht. Shiras und Isfahan, wenn sie erst gründlich modernisiert sind, werden nicht viel anders aussehen als

⁴² The "Kaviani" Art Printing Press, *List of Publications & Books for Sale*; Friedrich Rosen, *Shumā Farsī Hārf Mizānīd* (1925), 139–42.

⁴³ Edward Granville Browne, *A Literary History of Persia. Modern Times (1500–1924)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 464–65.

⁴⁴ Hamid Algar, *Mirzā Malkum Khān. A Biographical Study in Iranian Modernism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), 267–71; Hasan Javadi and Farrokh Gaffary, "Āqā Tabrizī," *Encyclopædia Iranica* II, no. 2 (1986): 182–83.

⁴⁵ Persian Postcards, 1920s, bilingual postcards printed by Kaviani, ASWPC.

Vorstädte von Essen, Kapstadt oder Chicago. Romantik und Poesie verlassen ihre alten Sitze. Eigenarten der Länder und ihrer Bewohner verschwinden und machen allgemeinen internationalen Typen Platz.⁴⁶

If the photographs were taken by Friedrich or Nina Rosen or by someone else is difficult to estimate. Several of the images are also found in the collection of the famous Armenian-Iranian photographer Antoin Sevruguin, who had over the decades as photographer of country and the Qajar court amassed a collection of 7,000 photographs that was largely destroyed when his neighbour Zahir ed-Dowleh's house on 'Ala ed-Dowleh street was bombarded during the Constitutional Revolution, with the remainder of the collection confiscated under Reza Shah Pahlavi for its supposed depiction of a backward Iran.⁴⁷ An image that made it onto a Kaviani postcard that was also in Sevruguin's collection shows a group of derwishes sitting in a half circle. On the back of the original photograph in the Rosen collection, Rosen noted that it showed "a group of derwishes sitting in the garden of the German legation at a banquet". Sevruguin or someone from his studio may very well have spent a day with the Germans taking pictures, but some of these photographs may also have been Rosen originals developed in Sevruguin's studio. Some images that look like Sevruguin, but are not exact matches of the ones found in recognised Sevruguin collections such as one from the funeral of Naser ed-Din Shah, were acquired by Friedrich and Nina and sent to Friedrich's mother Serena in Paris as an illustration of current events,

46 "To provide a picture of the country, as it was until the onset of the new time, that is till a few years ago... Following the example of the Occident everything is levelled. Shiraz and Isfahan, whence they will be properly modernised, will not look very different from the suburbs of Essen, Cape Town or Chicago. Romanticism and poetry leave their old seat. Idiosyncrasies of countries and their inhabitants disappear and make space for general international types." Friedrich Rosen, *Persien in Wort und Bild*, 6–7.

47 Frederick Bohrer, ed., *Sevruguin and the Persian Image: Photographs of Iran, 1870–1930*, (Washington: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery and University of Washington Press, 1999); Aphrodite Désirée Navab, "Sevruguin, Antoin," *Encyclopædia Iranica*, 20 July 2003. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/sevruguin-antoin-1>; Lyle Rexer, "A Persian Pioneer in a Western Art," *New York Times*, 13 May 2001; H.C. Tolman, "The Sevruguin Photograph of the Naks-i-Rustam Inscription," *The American Journal of Philology* 44, no. 2 (1923): 168–79; Jeffrey B. Spurr, "Person and Place: The Construction of Ronald Graham's Persian Photo Album," *Muqarnas* 19 (2002): 193–223; Donna Stein, "Three Photographic Traditions in Nineteenth-Century Iran," *Muqarnas* 6 (1989): 112–30; Aphrodite Désirée Navab, "To Be or not to Be an Orientalist? The Ambivalent Art of Antoin Sevruguin," *Iranian Studies* 35, no. 1/3 (2002): 113–44.

as demonstrated by a note on the back.⁴⁸ The fact that some images may not have been Sevruguin's, but look a lot like his productions, show how much of a trend-setter he was in any case. "Sevruguin had a dominance over the market that is attested by the sheer number of his photographs that survive in albums assembled by Iranians and non-Iranians alike", Schwerda noted, but a "detailed study of appropriations and re-appropriations" is still lacking.⁴⁹ What these photographic reproductions show regardless, is that part of the nation-building that the modernist circles of Iranian Berlin were engaging in was to create a pictorial invention of traditions rooted in a continuous Perso-Islamic history as a counterweight to the internationalisation and hypermodernisation-cum-Aryanism that was gaining ever more traction in Iran.



Fig. 8.2. Kaviani postcard "Derwishes at Tehran". Based on an original photograph in the Rosen collection titled "Derwish-banquet in the German legation".

⁴⁸ Antoin Sevruguin, Funeral Bier of Nasir al-Din Shah, Placed in the Takkiya Dawlat, Tehran (Iran), 1896, photograph, FSA A.15 02, Jay Bisno Collection of Sevruguin Photographs, SI; Rosen, Persian Photographs, 1890s, ASWPC.

⁴⁹ Mira Xenia Schwerda, "Iranian Photography: From the Court, to the Studio, to the Street," in *Technologies of the Image. Art in 19th-Century Iran*, David J. Roxburgh and Mary McWilliams (Cambridge: Harvard Art Museums, 2017), 89, 103–4.

Although Orientalists across Europe were keen to re-establish international working relationships after the war and restart the free and affordable circulation of the latest research findings, bursaries for research trips had become few and far between. With previously dominant German scholars often excluded from western forums of academic discourse as a matter of state policy, larger working groups and congresses met on the national level and began to form nation-centred scholarly.⁵⁰ Younger German Orientalists especially struggled, while on a private level older scholars like Rosen, who had cultivated relations during research trips or congresses in the pre-war years, continued to correspond and meet. Rosen's contribution to the chapter on Islam in Hans Haas' and Edvard Lehmann's *Textbuch zur Religionsgeschichte* was an instance of such rekindled relations. Lehmann had been a professor of the history of religions in Copenhagen during the International Orientalist Congress in 1908 before moving via Berlin to Lund. The textbook's chapter on Islam was a co-labour of Rosen with the Semitists August Fischer of Leipzig and Johann Pedersen of Copenhagen. It provided an overview of the development of Islam from its beginnings to the abrogation of the Ottoman caliphate and the modern Middle East, with Rosen introducing Sufism, based on Ignaz Goldziher and his translations of Sa'di, Rumi and Khayyam.⁵¹ As head of the main German Orientalist association, Rosen naturally attended the national Orientalist congresses that met biannually, on occasion contributing a talk to the Berlin working group of the DMG.⁵² But while he was a respected elderly statesman in these truncated Orientalist circles that often regressed back to the dry labour of philological analysis, in the world of Kaviani Rosen could exchange thoughts with young and zippy intellectuals

50 Franz Babinger to C.H. Becker, 27 December 1919, 40 23 VI HA NL Becker, PA AA; Ernst Herzfeld to C.H. Becker, 1 March 1923, 40 23 VI HA NL Becker, PA AA; Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje to E.G. Browne, 15 December 1919, 6, Browne Papers (8–14), CUL Manuscripts; Ernst Herzfeld to E.G. Browne, 29 December 1920, 9, Browne Papers (8–14), CUL Manuscripts; Rosen, Porzig, and Printz, "Protokollarischer Bericht über die am 28. Sept. 1927 in der Universität zu Göttingen abgehaltene Mitgliederversammlung der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft," *ZDMG* 81 (6), no. 3/4 (1927): CLVI–CLVII; "Bericht über die Mitgliederversammlung der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft im Festsaal der Universität Wien am Dienstag, den 10. Juni 1930," *ZDMG* 84 (9) (1930): 23; Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 476–80; Fuchs, "Politics of the Republic of Learning," 206; L. Hanisch, *Nachfolger der Exegeten*, 86–89.

51 Pedersen, Fischer, and Rosen, "Islam," 342; Goldziher, *Mohammed and Islam*, 167–71; "Kritische Bibliographie," *Islam* 13, no. 3–4 (January 1923): 346–8.

52 Rosen, J. Lewy, and H. Heintze, "Protokoll über die Schlußsitzung des Münchener Orientalistentages 1924," *ZDMG* 78 (3) (1924): LXXXIV; Rosen, J. Lewy, and H. Heintze, "Mitgliederversammlung der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft am 1. Oktober 1924, Universität München," *ZDMG* 78 (3) (1924): LXII–LXIV; Paraphe, "Abschrift," Personalakten 12574, PA AA (Berlin, 1925); Rosen, Porzig, and Printz, "Protokoll."

and work on exciting projects for a new era. Leaving behind the misery of Germany's presence, Rosen's encounters at Kaviani connected to his younger years.

Even though Arabs, Egyptians, Indians, Iranians and Turks had arrived in Berlin in the mid-1910s following the call of the same "anti-imperialist" German war policy and with more students, artists and refugees flocking to the German capital from across Africa, Asia and Europe after the war, these migrants did not organise in a universal anti-colonialist movement, as the Comintern and Willi Münzberg had hoped, but pursued their political goals "along national or ethnic lines".⁵³ Mirroring the European fracturing into national spheres of politics, the fight for self-determination and sovereignty produced less horizontal anti-imperialist interaction in Berlin than simultaneity, with Turkish students in the vein of the sociologist Zia Gökalp struggling with the same balance of adopting, in the words of Mangold-Will, "western civilisational achievements while concurrently preserving Turkish national cultural uniqueness" for optimal Turkish modernisation as the Iranians and others.⁵⁴ Rather, in line with Germany's post-war soft foreign policy outside Europe, associations like the Deutsch-Persische Gesellschaft that were tied into the Auswärtiges Amt promoted vertical exchange. Intellectuals and artists from the East were brought into German institutions, and Germans, who had before the war travelled the world now frequented the world's "colonies" in Berlin.

Rosen was not alone in being drawn to the circles of the Persisches Komitee and their discussions of philosophy, materialism and chess puzzles.⁵⁵ A frequent discussant of the reputedly Persian strategy board game was the German pre-war dragoman in Tehran and consul in Tabriz, Wilhelm Litten (1880–1932). Litten, who had witnessed the Armenian death marches in 1916, became secretary of the Deutsch-Persische Gesellschaft, and apart from a three year stint as German consul in Latvian Liepāja, spent the better part of the 1920s in Berlin as part of the foreign ministry working on the Orient, before being posted to Baghdad in 1928, where he died in 1932. Litten published essays and books on Iran and taught Persian and Turkish at the SOS, where he was colleagues with Taqi Erani. An examiner at his old school, Rosen had arranged with culture minister Carl-Heinrich Becker in 1925 for Erani to teach "Oriental Rhetoric and Logic" at

⁵³ Kuck, "Anti-Colonialism in Post-Imperial Environment," 137–51.

⁵⁴ Pedersen, Fischer, and Rosen, "Islam," 377–82; "Kritische Bibliographie"; Mangold-Will, *Grenzte Freundschaft*, 295–96, 498.

⁵⁵ Epkenhans, *Iranische Moderne im Exil*, 198–203; Arjomand, "Kaviani," 175; Franz Babinger to C.H. Becker, 12 January 1918, 7989 Rep 92 VI HA NL Becker, PA AA; Blücher, *Zeitenwende*, 143.

the SOS.⁵⁶ Having started off his diplomatic career in the same dragoman's house on the backside of the German legation in Tehran that had been the home of the Rosens in the 1890s, Litten considered himself a friend of Iran, and like Rosen, an advocate for German diplomats in Iran to converse in Persian just as they would in French while in France.⁵⁷ Litten and Rosen pooled resources. Litten provided Rosen with more recent photographic material for his *Persien in Wort und Bild*, and Rosen introduced Litten's reproduction of a Persian manuscript of ta'ziya – rhapsodies of religious drama commemorating the suffering of the Shi'ite martyrs – under the title *Das Drama in Persien*. Under the influence of Rosen and Christensen, Litten's last publication was a philological analysis of the word “Khayyam” (tentmaker), and its philosophical and poetic implications.⁵⁸ Underpinned by an active knowledge of Iran, harnessed during their diplomatic careers, and by a favourable disposition towards the country and its people, their mutual support and collaboration in the Iranian circles of Berlin had the twofold aim of positively presenting Iran towards a German audience and furthering independent Iranian development.

Rooted in his pre-war experiences, encounters and memories, Rosen's post-diplomacy poetry translations, picture books, language guides, intellectual histories and political analyses were written into a rapidly changing political, intellectual and cultural landscape of Germany's capital. Rosen did not deal so much in the “Realien” of German Orientalistik as he re-invoked the near-past and the rapidly disappearing pre-modern, while inquiring into medieval Islam as a source of intellectual and spiritual enlightenment. This made him in the Iranian circles of 1920s Berlin a traditionalist and a cautious warner against rash modernisation. His wide-ranging interests in Iranian culture and history and friendly disposition to Iranians and Persian culture made the elderly Rosen a critical

56 Wilhelm Litten, *Persische Flitterwochen* (Berlin: Georg Stilke, 1925); Epkenhans, *Iranische Moderne im Exil*, 29; Wilhelm Litten, “Einführung in die persische Diplomatensprache. Wortlaut in persischer Schikästä-Schrift,” *Lehrbücher des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen zu Berlin XXXI*, no. 2 (1919): 1–63; Wilhelm Litten, “Einführung in die persische Diplomatensprache. I. Abteilung. Vorwort, Umschreibung und Übersetzung,” *Lehrbücher des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen zu Berlin XXXI*, no. 1 (1919): VII–64; Litten, *Persien “pénétration pacifique”*; “Mitgliedernachrichten,” *ZDMG* 78 (3), no. 3/4 (1924): LXXXVII–XCI; Manfred Lorenz, “Zur Iranistik in Berlin,” *Spektrum Iran* 26, no. 1 (2013): 51; Arani, *Euclid by Khayyam*; Mangold-Will, *Begrenzte Freundschaft*, 190; Jalali, *Erani in Berlin*, 93–97.

57 Litten, *Persien “pénétration pacifique”*, 369; Litten, *Persische Flitterwochen*, 377–78.

58 Friedrich Rosen, *Persien in Wort und Bild*, 7; Wilhelm Litten, ed., Friedrich Rosen, *Das Drama in Persien* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1929), III–V; Jamshid Malekpour, *The Islamic Drama. Ta'ziya* (London: Frank Cass, 2004), 133; Litten, *Was bedeutet Chäjjam?*

sounding board for the ideas of some of the key agents of twentieth century Iranian political and intellectual history.

Participating in the intellectual labours of the publishing house Kaviani, Rosen contributed to laying the printed basis for Iranian national consciousness, to paraphrase Anderson.⁵⁹ What had been before the war an Orientalist sport of acquiring, transcribing and analysing old Oriental manuscripts in European libraries had proliferated and transformed. The pangs and dislocations of a new era shook up the repositories that predominantly European Orientalists had extracted, analysed and rephrased into epistemologies of the Orient. Some of these collections began moving back into Iranian hands, who galvanised them with new bodies and media of knowledge that were seen as beneficial for building an independent and viable Iranian nation. The likes of Taqizadeh, Kazemzadeh, Tarbiyat, Qazvini, Erani, Ghanizadeh, Pourdavoud and Andre Hossein set about producing their own studies, estimations, hypotheses and works of art, often based on or integrating the existing research of Orientalists. But rather than describing Oriental others or kin, theirs was an intellectual struggle of self-definition and national self-determination, in which some Europeans continued to play a part.

The collaboration of Rosen and Erani on Khayyam and the *Ruba'iyat* at Kaviani epitomised this channelling of knowledge productions back to the Persian speaking world. Erani reformulated the various strains of thought and encounters he made in Berlin, as Jalali maintains, into a political philosophy of volition and dialectic logic, that sought a

trinity of wealth appreciation, creation, and distribution, when applied across historical timescale and global geography, within the realm of nation-state, allowing the identification of fields of action ripe for intelligent intervention, to steer the course of events toward social progress. This process has neither a preordained path nor a predetermined outcome, making intelligent human action the vital element, at individual and collective scales, notably combating poverty and propensity for wars of domination and plunder.⁶⁰

This was an arithmetic of dynamic development, rooted in Iranian history through Khayyam's work on Euclid and speaking to the segmented web of humanity's interrelations. After the death of his "old friend" Rosen in 1935, Erani introduced his work on Khayyam's Euclid in praising Rosen's *Ruba'iyat* as "the

⁵⁹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2016), 44.

⁶⁰ Jalali, *Erani in Berlin*, 275–76.

most important Persian edition” that supplemented his philosophical reintroduction with a poetic rendition of this spirit of liberation against the odds.⁶¹

3 Rise and Fall of the Aryan and the Semitic

When Rosen first spoke about the Aryan spirit of Omar Khayyam in 1908, it was an “Aryan spirit in Semitic vest”. After the war these words had taken on a different, vitriolic meaning. Antisemitism was on the rise, with Jews blamed for the loss of the war and all other hardship. Rosen had not identified or conceived of himself as Jewish or had assigned much significance to his descentance from Ignaz Moscheles in this context. The friend of the Rosens, Marie von Bunsen, observed of pre-war Berlin that “every intelligent human being was suspected of having semitic blood a priori” but this had not touched Rosen much. An anti-Semitic smear employed by the colonialist *Alldeutsche* against Rosen in Morocco went nowhere at the time, though rattling his feathers, but this accusation appears to have lingered in Morocco, as during the war the *Times* found the “Oriental blood which flowed in his veins” to have motivated Rosen’s role on the side of the Moroccans when he was German envoy there.⁶²

Rosen’s role in Morocco also came to haunt him, when he was slated to be appointed ambassador in Madrid in 1920, but the Spanish government announced that it would refuse his accreditation. The antisemitic newspaper *Freie Meinung* reported:

Ueber die schroffe Ablehnung des “deutschen” Gesandten Fritz Rosen durch die spanische Regierung verlautet..., daß diese keineswegs allein auf seine spanienfeindliche frühere Schürarbeit in Tanger, sondern vielmehr auf eine ganz persönliche unüberwindliche Abneigung des Königs gegen jüdische Botschafter zurückzuführen sein.

An implausible insinuation, considering that king Alfonso XIII offered his open support to Sephardic Jewish communities in Morocco, the Balkans and Palestine. The Jewish *CV-Zeitung* disputed the characterisation and called Rosen a “Germanic Christian”.⁶³ In defence of local son Rosen against the antisemitic tirades

⁶¹ Arani, *Euclid by Khayyam*, 1.

⁶² Bunsen, *Welt in der ich lebte*, 188–89; Vassel, *Berlin und Marokko*, 89; Harris, “German Intrigues.”

⁶³ “About the brusque rejection of the ‘German’ envoy Fritz Rosen by the Spanish government is reported that it was by no means only caused by his earlier anti-Spanish agitation in Tangier, but rather due to an entirely personal and insurmountable aversion of the king against Jewish

of the *Kreuzzeitung*, the *Lippische Landeszeitung* elaborated on the long service of the Rosens to Lippe and their Christian heritage, and found the antisemitism levelled at Rosen laughable:

Auf der Suche nach Semiten haben die Deutschnationalen entdeckt, daß auch Dr. Friedrich Rosen, ein Sohn unseres Landes, zu den verjudeten Diplomaten gehört, von denen unsere Verwaltung zu "reinigen" ist... Sachlich wird man die deutschnationalen antisemitischen Gefeixes, die bald diesen, bald jenen jüdischer Tendenzen verdächtigen, mit einem Lächeln quittieren. Es ist immerhin bezeichnend, daß sich heute keine Familie davon sicher ist, gelegentlich einmal als jüdisch "verdächtig" zu werden.⁶⁴

Shortly after Rosen was appointed foreign minister in 1921, the party convention of the opposition Deutschnationale Volkspartei accused the Wirth government of being run by "four Jewish ministers". The liberal Verein zur Abwehr des Antisemitismus explained:

Und nun geschah das Unglaubliche unter einem katholischen Reichskanzler: Zwei der neuen Minister, der Minister des Inneren Gradnauer und der Wiederaufbauminister Rathenau, sind Juden, der Minister der Justiz Schiffer ist ein getaufter Jude, und die Antisemiten stempeln den neuen Minister des Auswärtigen für das neue Kabinett, Rosen, ebenfalls zum Juden. So hat man also vier Juden für das neue Kabinett konstruiert, und nun geht der Hexensabbat in der deutschnationalen, antisemitischen und deutschvölkischen Presse los.⁶⁵

In the following years, Rosen found entry in books titled *The Truth about the Jews. Told by a Gentile* or the virulently antisemitic *Sigilla Veri*. Rosen was made a result of "bi-racial breeding" and the "fusion of Hebrew with Aryan blood", and part of the "güldnen Adel" that "swarmed" the Auswärtiges Amt,

ambassadors." "Gerüchte," *CV-Zeitung* 2, no. 102 (1920): 75–76; Bernd Rother, *Spanien und der Holocaust* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 2001), 29–32.

64 "On their search for Semites the Deutschnationalen have discovered, that also Dr. Friedrich Rosen, a son of our land, belongs do the Jewified diplomats from which our administration has to be 'cleansed'... Factually one will shrug off the Deutschnationale antisemitic smirking with a smile. But it is anyhow characteristic that today no family can be safe to be once in a while "suspected" of being Jewish." Schacht, "'Semitische' Dr. Rosen."

65 "And now happened the unbelievable under a Catholic chancellor: two of the new ministers, the minister of the interior Gradnauer and the reconstruction minister Rathenau, are Jews, the minister of justice Schiffer is a baptised Jew, and the antisemites also stamp the new minister of the exterior for the new cabinet, Rosen, a Jew. Thus, they have constructed four Jews for the new cabinet, and now begins the witches' sabbath in the deutschnationalen, antisemitic and deutschvölkischen press." "'Die Hüter des Grals der Freiheit'," *Mitteilungen aus dem Verein zur Abwehr des Antisemitismus* 31, no. 11/12 (20 June 1921): 77.

as his mother was “a born Moscheles”.⁶⁶ Rosen had reason enough to drop the Aryan from his publications, Orientalist or not, in the 1920s.

Before the war the concept had not exuded quite the same toxicity and the concepts of the Aryan and the Semitic were not absent from Rosen’s thinking. What did they mean? During Shah Mozaffar ed-Din’s Berlin visit in 1902 the press had associated Germany with Persia through shared Aryan roots at a time when Wilhelm II was infatuated with Chamberlain’s promulgation of the Aryans as a master race in opposition to the lowly Jews in his *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*.⁶⁷ Chamberlain had moved in the circles of the composer Richard Wagner, and another Wagnerian, Ludwig Schemann, translated and adapted de Gobineau’s *Inégalités races* to German and made, as Köck notes, a business out of spreading the Aryan myth in Alldeutsche, völkische and other right-wing circles. In the Weimar Republic, Schemann’s Gobineau Vereinigung then became a galvanising point for the extreme right, and found entry to academia in the mid-1920s. Before the war, the Brockhaus encyclopaedia still separated into Asiatic Aryans and European Indo-Europeans, and in the vein of Renan the Viennese Indologist Leopold von Schroeder wrote of Aryans and Semites in terms of equal nobility. But by the 1920s Sigmund Freud believed in psychological differences between Semites and Aryans, C.G. Jung spoke about differences in the “Aryan unconscious” and “Semitic unconscious” and in 1921 Adolf Hitler started talking about the the for European sensibilities de-semitised “Aryan Jesus”, first invented in Orientalist academia by Renan and later racialised by Delitzsch and Haupt.⁶⁸ While Rosen’s “Aryan” had been an ill-defined “free-thinking” spirit of historical fallaciousness, the Aryan, from which he became now racially excluded, was that of intentional myth-making, spewing hatred and costing his cabinet colleague Walther Rathenau’s life.

Rosen’s 1909 essay on Omar Khayyam’s life, times and worldview, attached to the *Sinnsprüche*, remained unaltered in the following editions of 1912, 1914,

⁶⁶ Walter Hurt, *Truth About the Jews. Told by a Gentile* (Chicago: Horton and Company, 1922), 67–68; Erich Ekkehard, pseud., Philipp Stauff, *Sigilla Veri* (Erfurt: U-Bodung, 1929), 126.

⁶⁷ Motadel, “Iran and the Aryan,” 124; Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 311–15; von Bülow, *Staatssekretariat bis Marokko*, 172.

⁶⁸ Qazwini, Browne, 39–40; Motadel, “Iran and the Aryan, 119–45; Julian Köck, “Ludwig Schemann und die Gobineau-Vereinigung,” *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 59, no. 9 (2011): 723–40; Kurt Nemitz, “Antisemitismus in der Wissenschaftspolitik der Weimarer Republik. Der ‘Fall Ludwig Schemann’,” *Jahrbuch des Instituts für Deutsche Geschichte. Universität Tel Aviv* 12 (1983): 377–407; Poliakov, *Mythe aryenne*, 290, 325–28, 358; Heschel, *Aryan Jesu*; Hajo Goertz, “Der Mythos vom arischen Jesus,” *Deutschlandfunk Kultur*, 4 July 2009.

1919, 1921, and 1922.⁶⁹ Drawing on intellectual currents between European Orientalism and early Iranian nationalism, Rosen had posited that Khayyam was characteristic of his Persianness, an “Aryan spirit in Semitic vest”, marked by free-thinking, scepticism and critical of authority and dogma. Underlying the Aryan-spirited Khayyam was Rosen’s intention to make the poet-philosopher by reference to a supposedly common Aryan past or cultural-linguistic presence relatable to a German readership. Placing Khayyam on a pedestal of literary world history, as a noble figure of free thought and unity in an uncertain world, he presented him in contrast to the negative view that Rosen took of Semitic Arabianess and dogmatic Islam in the Orient.

Four instances shed more light on the separation and relation of Semitic and non-Semitic in Rosen’s thought around the time of the publication in 1909 and when it was re-issued in 1929. Rosen speculated that the ancient Iranian tragedy of Rostam and his son Sohrab, as popularised in Firdowsi’s *Shahnameh* (written 977–1010 CE), went back to an Indo-European “Ur-Geschichte” (original history) from which the ninth century German *Hildebrandslied* also originated. In both epic legends father and son face each other in battle without knowing of each other’s identity. The fathers fatally injure their sons, before recognising each other, culminating in a tragic reconciliation.⁷⁰

Rosen found another “Ur-Mythos” (original myth) connecting Germany and Iran. Prompted by an earlier comparison of his friend Andreas, Rosen thought that Kyffhäuser was similar to the occultation of Muhammad ibn Hasan al-Mahdi, the ninth century twelfth and final imam in Shi’ite belief, who would on the day of days return to bring peace and justice to the world and abrogate oppression.⁷¹ The Kyffhäuser legend held a centuries old popular belief that

69 Friedrich Rosen, *Die Sinnsprüche Omars des Zeltmachers. Rubaiyat-i-Omar-i-Khajjam*, 2 (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1912); Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche* (1919); Friedrich Rosen, *Die Sinnsprüche Omars des Zeltmachers. Rubaiyat-i-Omar-i-Khajjam*, 4 (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlagsanstalt, 1921); Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche* (1922).

70 As Hellgardt noted, the narrative of the fight between father and son is common in other languages as well, and was unduly stylised in Germany around 1900 as speaking to Germanic heroism. Andreas Heuser, “Hildebrand und Hadebrand,” in *Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde. Zweiter Band F-J*, Johannes Hoops (Straßburg: Trübner, 1913–15), 525; Ernst Hellgardt, “Hildebrandslied und jüngerer Hildebrandslied,” in *Killy. Literaturlexikon. Autoren und Werke des deutschsprachigen Kulturraumes. Band 5. Har-Hug*, Wilhelm Kühlmann, et al. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009), 416.

71 Leopold von Schroeder operated in a similar vein, when drawing parallels between the Sanskrit Vedas and medieval German myths. Viložny finds that the Qa’im (Mahdi) figure existed in Islamic religious thought before the occultation of the twelfth imam in the ninth century. By the second half of the tenth century the hidden imam and the Qa’im merged into one. Friedrich Carl

twelfth century emperor Friedrich I, known as Barbarossa, had retreated into a mountain with a band of loyalists and would one day awaken to save Germany and deliver it to new splendour⁷²: “Wie in unserer Kyffhäusersage Barbarossa nicht erwachen kann, solange die Raben den Berg umfliegen, so wird der Mahdi bei seiner Wiederkunft damit beginnen, sämtliche Mullas auszurotten, dieselben, die doch gerade den Glauben an seine Wiederkunft predigen.” The Shah will help the Mahdi on his horse and this will be an “era full of happiness and glory” which will last to the end of days. The effect of this dogma on the politics of Persia had not been beneficial, Rosen thought: “Wenn ein Volk seine Hoffnung auf ein Ereignis setzt, welches ganz außerhalb der eigenen Macht liegt, so verfällt es leicht in stumpfe Resignation und Untätigkeit.”⁷³ Just like the Aryan topped caste system in India had repelled bourgeois Rosen, common Iranian-German myths of a shared Indo-European past were not all positive.⁷⁴

More dubious was Rosen’s hodgepodge of Biblical history and contemporary Oriental flora. Rosen read references in the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 16:21, Exodus 34:14) that commanded the Jews to cut down the Ashera poles to be the reason why the Palestine he witnessed in the nineteenth century lacked cultivation of plants that were not used for agriculture (fruit and olive trees), and contrasted this negatively with Iran, where the bustan, or orchard, existed side by side with the gulestan, the rose and pleasure garden.⁷⁵ As Poliakov noted,

Andreas, *Die Babi's in Persien. Ihre Geschichte und Lehre quellenmäßig und nach eigener Anschauung dargestellt*. (Leipzig: Akademische Buchhandlung, 1896), 10; Sami Zubaida, “Sects in Islam,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Sociology of Religion*, Peter Clarke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 552–53; Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 318; Viložny, *Early Shiʿi Faith*, 94.

⁷² This was the narrative that had become prevalent in the nineteenth century. The legend of a final emperor Görich traced back to the times before Barbarossa, to Karl the Great, and finds first in the Roman Empire of the fourth century. Along the way new elements were attached to the storyline. The ravens, for example, were only added between the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Görich, “Barbarossa in deutschen Erinnerungskulturen,” 106–11.

⁷³ “Like in our Kyffhäuser legend Barbarossa cannot awake for as long as the ravens fly around the mountain, the Mahdi will begin at his return to exterminate all the mullahs, the same ones, who are preaching the belief in his return... When a people sets its hope in an event, which lies entirely outside its own power, it easily lapses into dull resignation and inaction.” Friedrich Rosen, “Der Einfluß geistiger Strömungen auf die politische Geschichte Persiens,” *ZDMG* 76 (1922): 121.

⁷⁴ Friedrich Rosen, “Kastenwesen,” 179.

⁷⁵ A decrease in forestation in the southern Levant took place corresponding in time to the decline of the Ashera cult. Based on their latest archaeological findings Langgut and Finkelstein argue that severe droughts and famines caused Egypt’s pharaohs to step up “grain production in conquered Canaan” and Syria to supply the worst affected provinces of the Egyptian empire. Dafna Langgut, et al., “Vegetation and Climate During the Bronze and Iron Ages (~3600–

the German historian and educator Julius Lippert had contrasted “Aryan agriculturalists with Semitic shepherds”, who were due to the absence of a mother goddess in Judaism unable to invent agriculture and the sociologist Werner Sombart postulated that the Jews were a nomadic people of the desert, in opposition to the Nordic peoples of the “moist forests”.⁷⁶ Informed by a similar line of thinking about Semitic forestry, Rosen’s brother Felix observed on their joint expedition to Ethiopia in 1905 tree growth in relation to Semitic qualities:

So ist das nördliche Abessinien verarmt, denn das Herrenvolk der semitischen Abessinier, das hier vorherrscht, tritt überall als Waldverwüster auf, während die eingessessenen oder von Süden zugewanderten Kuschiten (Agau, Galla, etc.), welche Bauern sind und den Wald schonen, in holzreichen Reservaten sitzen.⁷⁷

In later years enjoying walks in the Teutoburger Wald near Detmold, Rosen connected to a long tradition of German romanticism and identity formation in connection with trees, forests and nature, but as Rüger noted there “was nothing peculiarly German about the link between nature and nation... featur[ing] prominently in most nationalist discourses of the nineteenth century.”⁷⁸ Underpinning the Rosens’ timeless ascription of qualities to Semitic peoples, was a notion of time-flattening going back to their Biblical education in situ as children.⁷⁹ Through a supposed bridge of connections between German forest and Persian garden cultures, Jewish nomadism and Ethiopian deforestation, the Rosens created a form of natural co-nationality that contrasted the Semitic to the Aryan or the Hamitic.

Nonetheless, Rosen valued Arabic poetry and its tribal ancestry, praised Islamic rituals for their cultural value – though tracing much of what he perceived as positive in Islam to non-Arabic influences and only in the 1920s discovering

600 BCE) in the Southern Levant Based on Palynological Records,” *Radiocarbon* 57, no. 2 (2015): 217–35; Ariel David, “To Save Middle East from Climate Change, Ancient Egypt Mounted Massive Relief Effort, Archaeologists Discover,” *Haaretz*, 1 March 2018.

⁷⁶ Poliakov, *Aryan Myth*, 274, 286.

⁷⁷ “Thus northern Abyssinia is impoverished, because the Herrenvolk of the Semitic Abyssinians, that predominates here, behaves everywhere as forest devastators, while the indigenous or from the south immigrated Kushites, who are farmers and spare the forest, sit in wood-rich reservoirs.” Population growth had caused the deforestation. Felix Rosen, *Charakterpflanzen des abessinischen Hochlandes*, 25/3.

⁷⁸ Friedrich Rosen to Enno Littmann, 23 May 1933, 33, 28 NL 245 EL, StaBiB; Johannes Zechner, *Der deutsche Wald. Eine Ideengeschichte zwischen Poesie und Ideologie. 1800–1945* (Darmstadt: Zabern, 2016).

⁷⁹ Friedrich Rosen, 1926, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte I*, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 12, 37; Felix Rosen, “Bruder Dornbusch,” 403.

pre-Islamic Arabic poetry.⁸⁰ He also interacted without prejudice with Jews, whether they were fellow Orientalists, like Goldziher, the “famous doctor” Nur Mahmud in Tehran, the wealthy Sassoon merchants of Baghdad, or with Albert Einstein, who thanked Rosen for “the pearls of Persian wisdom with which I became acquainted through your hospitality and your work. As an Oriental by blood”, Einstein continued “I feel they are especially meaningful to me.”⁸¹ Rosen did not perceive of the Semitic and the Aryan or Indo-European as absolute or racialised, but in terms of related and malleable spirits. His reading of Goldziher’s work on Islam changed Rosen’s approach and he unceremoniously dropped the Aryan myth in 1912.⁸² Regarding the Jewish branch of the Semitic world, the book that his father Georg Rosen had started on the supposed fusion of the Jews and the Phoenicians and that Rosen published with the theologian Georg Bertram in 1929 is telling. Here it was argued that the majority of the Phoenicians had converted to Judaism, which, as Rosen wrote in his foreword, “must have formatively contributed to the remarkable expansion of Christianity all over the world”.⁸³

The *Sinnsprüche* published with Insel-Verlag in 1929 came in a new garb. The 152 quatrains and the explanatory footnotes were entirely the same, but the three essays attached to the *Sinnsprüche* were gone and replaced by a concise introduction. Rosen opened the introduction with “The Persians were the inheritors of Greek scholarship” and closed with the hope that “thus also in Germany [Khayyam’s] work will become a common good of the people, as it already is in world literature”.⁸⁴ In between was a shortened and along the lines of recent scholarly research updated description not dissimilar to his previous work. Notably, the discussion over the question of the authenticity of the *Ruba’iyat* found

⁸⁰ Friedrich Rosen, “Friedrich Rückerts Amrilkais-Übersetzung,” *ZDMG* 78 (3) (1924): 102–5.

⁸¹ Friedrich Rosen, 1898, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte II*, 7 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 143; Freeman Dyson, *The Ultimate Quotable Einstein* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 9; Günther Henle, *Weggenosse des Jahrhunderts. Als Diplomat, Industrieller, Politiker und Freund der Musik* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1968), 18–19.

⁸² Friedrich Rosen, Entwurf zu Mesnevi, 1912, notebook, ASWPC, 123–125.

⁸³ Rosen distanced himself in the foreword from the book, assigning its main trajectory to his co-author Georg Bertram. Bertram and Rosen had had several “differences of opinion”. Rosen was not satisfied with the theological approach of Bertram and had not wanted to give it the subtitle “Das Antike Judentum als Missionsreligion” but only “Die Entstehung der Jüdischen Diaspora”. The eventual title was a compromise mediated by Littmann. Georg Rosen, *Juden und Phönizier*, VIII; Friedrich Rosen to Enno Littmann, 21 August 1929, 20, 28 NL 245 EL, StaBiB.

⁸⁴ Friedrich Rosen, *Die Sinnsprüche Omars des Zeltmachers. Rubaiyat-i-Omar-i-Khajjam*, 6 (Leipzig: Insel-Verlag, 1929); Friedrich Rosen, *Die Sinnsprüche Omars des Zeltmachers. Rubaiyat-i-Omar-i-Khajjam*, 6 (Leipzig: Insel-Verlag, 1930), 5, 14.

a lengthy entry. The Aryan, however, had disappeared. The notion no longer showed up in Rosen's new publications on Khayyam and the *Ruba'iyat* in the Weimar Republic and was also no factor in Rosen's other Orientalist publications.⁸⁵

After Rosen had accompanied Afghan King Amanullah in his meetings with German president Hindenburg in 1928, Rosen wrote "Die Entstehung des afghanischen Staates unter Benutzung persischer Quelle" (the emergence of the Afghan state drawing on Persian sources), a short Afghani-nationalist history. Rosen described all Turkish, Persian and Indian peoples and cultural influences of which modern Afghanistan was made up but found no trace of Aryanism, despite the myth of Aryan antiquity at the time replacing Persianate pasts from "India to Afghanistan to Iran", as Green and Motadel observe.⁸⁶ In the only book Rosen published that went beyond the Persianate world, his *Harut und Marut* from 1924, he presented a large potpourri in the best Orientalist tradition: many poems from Persian, but also from Arabic and Luri, excerpts of verses from Urdu, sayings in Hindi, songs in Turkish and Somali. The Somali song is blind poet Nur Aami's "peace song", which Rosen included in this collection of "Middle Asiatic" languages "not only due to literary reasons".⁸⁷

The Aryan myth had been so dislodged from his thought that in a 1934 article published with the regional *Westfälische Zeitung* under the title "Iran statt Persien. Ein geschichtlicher Name kommt wieder zu seinem Recht" (Iran rather than Persia. A historical name comes into its own) Rosen explained that, while the word Iran was etymologically related to the word Aryan, already back in the time of the Sasanians a "strong mixing with other non-Aryan elements" had set in. Mirroring the official Iranian government line Rosen argued that Iranians rightly demanded their country to be called Iran by Europeans, as Iranians had been conceiving of themselves and their country as Iranians and Iran for over a thousand years, and had falsely and inaccurately been labelled Persia by Europeans.⁸⁸ A year earlier, on the occasion of Firdowsi's millennial jubilee

⁸⁵ Friedrich Rosen, *Ruba'iyat*; Friedrich Rosen, "Textfrage der Vierzeiler"; Friedrich Rosen, *Quatrains of Khayyām*; Friedrich Rosen, *Quatrains of Khayyām*; Friedrich Rosen, "Herkunft des Weines. Omar-i Khajjam."

⁸⁶ Friedrich Rosen, "Die Entstehung des afghanischen Staates unter Benutzung persischer Quellen," *Preußische Jahrbücher* 212, no. 2 (May 1928): 125–34; Nile Green, "From Persianate Pasts to Aryan Antiquity. Transnationalism and Transformation in Afghan Intellectual History, c. 1880–1940," *Afghanistan* 1, no. 1 (2018): 26–67; Motadel, "Iran and the Aryan," 130.

⁸⁷ Friedrich Rosen, *Harut und Marut*, 11.

⁸⁸ Friedrich Rosen, "Iran statt Persien. Ein geschichtlicher Name kommt wieder zu seinem Recht," *Westfälische Zeitung*, 20 March 1935; Ansari, *Nationalism in Modern Iran*, 101–2.

staged by the Pahlavi government with much pomp, Rosen published an article with the Iranian newspaper *Iran-e Bastan* (ancient Iran), which is speculated to have been funded by the German Nazi regime, in which Rosen noted Firdowsi's inclusion of ancient Indo-Iranian figures in his epic *Shahnameh*, but then paraphrased Iranian prime minister Mohammad Foroughi as having said during the celebrations that Firdowsi's work had a great influence on the preservation and unity of the Persian people, and that it were not language and religion that formed the basis of a people, but a commonly experienced history.⁸⁹

Erani may have agreed. Rosen's other Khayyam colleague Christensen, with whom Rosen had before the war discussed Khayyam representing the "Persian/Aryan Spirit", also lost the Aryan in his 1927 *Critical Studies in the Ruba'iyat of 'Umar-i-Khayyam*. Even though he cooperated closely with the Pahlavi regime, Christensen rejected overtures by the German Nordische Gesellschaft in 1935, controlled by chief Nazi ideologist Rosenberg, to offer his Iranist expertise to their machinations: "Ich bin nämlich nicht, wie Sie mich nennen, "Prof. für orientalische Philologie und allgemeine Volkskunde", sondern einfach "Prof. für iranische Philologie"... Das Spezialgebiet der nordisch-germanischen Volkskunde ist mir verhältnismäßig fremd."⁹⁰ Many older German Indologists thought the Aryan myth nonsense, when applied to anything but antiquity, and among the Iranists Christian Bartholomae joined the ranks of Christensen and Andreas in disputing its factuality. Becker and Snouck Hurgronje conceived of Islamic studies as diametrically opposed to racialisation along a Semitic-Aryan divide. In a lecture in 1922 Snouck Hurgronje warned that this dichotomisation would, if pursued consequentially, bring about conflicts that would make the last war look like a "kinderspel" (child's play).⁹¹

Although the 1929 *Sinnsprüche* had been cleansed of the Aryan, five editions had entered the public domain with Omar Khayyam embodying the Aryan. The

⁸⁹ Friedrich Rosen, "Jashn-e Hezar Saleh-ye Ferdawsī [in Persian]." *Iran-e Bastan* 2: 28 (18 August 1933): 2–3; Zia-Ebrahimi, *Emergence of Iranian Nationalism*, 158; Jalali, *Erani in Berlin*, 13.

⁹⁰ "For I am not, as you call me, "Prof. for Oriental philology and general folk studies", but simply "Prof. for Iranian philology"... I am a relative stranger to the special field of Nordic-Germanic folk studies." Arthur Christensen, *Critical Studies in the Ruba'iyat of 'Umar-i-Khayyam. A Revised Text with English Translation*, (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1927); Arthur Christensen to Nordische Gesellschaft, May 1935, copy, H-Q bps 1 Utilg. 578, KB – HA; Arthur Christensen, *Omar Khayyam. Rubaiyat* (Copenhagen: Ejnar Munksgaard, 1943), 13; Hedemand Søltoft, *Christensen*; Ansari, *Nationalism in Iran*, 76.

⁹¹ Marchand, *German Orientalism*, 319; Manjapra, *Age of Entanglement*, 83; Fenneke Sysling, *Racial Science and Human Diversity in Colonial Indonesia* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2016), 138; Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, *De Islām en het Rassenprobleem. Rede uitgesproken op den 347sten Verjaardag der Leidsche Hoogeschool 8 Februari 1922* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1922), 7.

success of Rosen's initial *Ruba'iyat* translation and Khayyam interpretation continued to exercise discursive power and coincided with the rise of German identity formation based on Aryan supremacy. By 1933, the Aryan was all that was left in a review of Rosen's *Sinnsprüche* in the *Berliner Börsenzeitung*. Khayyam exemplified the "stiller aber zäher Kampf freigesinnter Geister gegen den Zwang des strengen Koranglaubens, den die semitischen Eroberer dem unterworfenen Perservolke auferlegte."⁹² The most prominent Khayyam scholar of Nazi Germany, Christian Rempis, equally built on the "Aryan-Indo-Germanic spirit" of Khayyam, finding in him "the spirit, that does not stop in the face of the last conclusions and suns itself in the possibilities of its strength".⁹³

This was mirrored in some Iranian nationalist circles in self-identifying as Aryan while othering the Semitic, as the rise of the Pahlavi dynasty raised the pre-Islamic and non-Arabic to state doctrine. Rosen's analysis of Khayyam's "striving for independent thinking and free searching for truth, in opposition to the rigid dogmatic walls erected by Arabianism" fit well into this discourse.⁹⁴ Although the English and Persian editions no longer referred to the Aryan, Rosen's Aryan Khayyam found entry in the literary work of another young Iranian frequenting Berlin's Kaviani circles, publishing articles with *Iranshahr* and corresponding with Christensen in Copenhagen: Sadeq Hedayat's 1934 *Taranye-hay Khayyam* (Songs of Khayyam). Rosen had known Hedayat's father Mehdi Qoli Hedayat Majd ed-Dowleh – who was fluent in German – from his days in Tehran, but this predated Hedayat's birth. Hedayat lived in Paris for several years in the interwar period, visited Berlin-Charlottenburg and translated Kafka to Persian. When Hedayat wrote of the philosopher Khayyam as marked by "free thought" in a "fanatical environment" representing "the rebellion of the Aryan spirit against Semitic beliefs"⁹⁵ Rosen's earlier characterisation shone

92 "quiet but gritty fight of free-minded spirits against the coercion of the strict Quranic belief, which the Semitic conquerors have forced onto the subdued people of Persians." R. Illnitzky, "Ein deutscher Diplomat als Dichter," *Berliner Börsenzeitung*, 21 December 1933.

93 Christian H. Rempis, *Die Vierzeiler 'Omar Chajjāms*, 19–20; Christian H. Rempis, "Die Überlieferung der 'Umar-i Ḥayyām zugeschriebenen Vierzeiler im 13. bis 16. Jahrhundert" (PhD diss., Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Berlin, 1937); Christian H. Rempis, *Beiträge zur Ḥayyām-Forschung* (Leipzig: Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft in Kommission bei F.A. Brockhaus, 1937); Christian H. Rempis, *Neue Beiträge zur Chajjām-Forschung*; Rempis, Christian, 27 June 1949, Entnazifizierung. Spruchkammerakten, Nr. 2669/151, Wü 13 T 2 Staatskommissariat für die politische Säuberung / 1945–1952, LABW StAS.

94 Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche* (1909), 111.

95 Mehdi Qoli Khan Qajar Qoyunli Majd ed-Dowleh to Friedrich Rosen, January 1893, Zettelkiste, ASWPC; Sadeq Hedayat, *Taranye-hay Khayyam*, 24; Sadeq Hedayat to Arthur Christensen,

through. The damage was done, or in the words of Heinz von Förster in his hermeneutics of the listener: “We hear, what we can hear and not what the other means... the listener and not the speaker determines the meaning of a statement.”⁹⁶

4 Modernity and Nations in Retrospection

In February 1892 the Berlin police directorate thought it prudent to ban the premier of a theatre piece it saw bound to ignite socio-economic tensions in the German Kaiserreich. Inspired by the Silesian weaver uprising in 1844, the play in question sympathetically portrays the plight of a group of weavers exploited by an unconscionable industrialist. As the despair of the weavers becomes untenable and the industrialist shows no sign of relenting, the weavers destroy the villa of their fleeing oppressor. During a show-down with the called-in military, a stray bullet fatally injures an elderly weaver, who, obedient to authority, tradition and God, had refrained from participating in the uprising. After being banned, *Die Weber*, Gerhart Hauptmann’s masterpiece, was first staged in a private circle of members of the Freie Bühne (free stage) a year later and finally premiered in public in the fall of 1894.⁹⁷ On a home visit to Germany in the spring of 1894 Rosen had first learned of Hauptmann’s piece through Friedrich Carl Andreas and his wife Lou Andreas-Salomé, a sympathiser of the “Freie Bühne”. He appreciated Hauptmann’s portrayal of the social discontents of mechanised modernisation in *Die Weber*, and thought Hauptmann’s piece would make for good reading for his wife’s family in London.⁹⁸ The themes of Hauptmann’s naturalist depiction were, however, not constrained to Silesia, his native Lippe, Prussia, or Great Britain.⁹⁹ By 1894 Rosen had witnessed first-hand the disrupt-

22 May 1935, H-Q bps 1 Utilg. 578, KB – HA; Ghahari, *Intellektuellen Kreise*, 71; Rahimieh, “Heydayat’s Translations of Kafka”; Abbas Maroufi, Personal communication, 13 April 2018

⁹⁶ Heinz von Foerster and Bernhard Pörksen, *Wahrheit ist die Erfindung eines Lügners. Gespräche für Skeptiker* (Heidelberg: Carl-Auer-Systeme, 1998), 156.

⁹⁷ Gerhart Hauptmann, *De Weber. (Die Weber.) Schauspiel aus den vierziger Jahren. Dialekt-Ausgabe* (Berlin: S. Fischer, 1892); Christina von Hodenberg, *Aufstand der Weber. Die Revolte von 1844 und ihr Aufstieg zum Mythos* (Bonn: Dietz, 1997), 9–13; Hans Schwab-Felisch, *Gerhart Hauptmann. Die Weber. Dichtung und Wirklichkeit*, 16 (Berlin: Ullstein, 2016), 73–84, 93, 100.

⁹⁸ Friedrich Rosen to F. C. Andreas, 14 March 1894, 361 1 Cod. Ms. F. C. Andreas, SUBG.

⁹⁹ Töns Heinrich Wendt, *Der Dorfjunge* (Bielefeld: Selbst-Verlag, 1913), 25–48; Meier, *Lipper unterwegs*, 80–81.

tions and upheavals that industrialisation, international trade and mechanisation were bringing to countries far away from the weaving mills of Europe.¹⁰⁰

Towards the end of his life, Rosen assessed with bewilderment that the modernisation transportation advances brought to the “Orient” had caused “an entire world, which I still saw”, to disappear, “never to be seen again”. Gloomily, in 1926 Rosen gave a sole reason for writing his (unpublished) German memories of his time in the Orient:

Die europäische politische Herrschaft und das europäische Unternehmertum, dem alle Länder des Orients bis auf kleine Reste verfallen sind, haben jetzt schon das meiste dessen, was den Reiz und die Poesie des Orients ausmacht, vernichtet und sind dabei, auch noch die letzten Spuren allen Mittelalterlichen-Romantischen zu verwischen... Es war mir infolge meiner Jugenderziehung und meiner späteren Studien ermöglicht, vieler Menschen Städte zu sehen und ihre Sinnesart zu erkennen, bevor auch diese in der großen Mühle der Allesgleichmachung zu farblosen Staub zermahlen wird.¹⁰¹

Faced with an “increasingly rapid slippage of the present into a historical past that is gone for good, a general perception that anything and everything may disappear”, to draw on Nora’s words, Rosen’s equilibrium had ruptured. Amid the onslaught of modernity that Rosen saw enveloping more and more of the world, it became this sense of loss of the original, intact and intrinsically valuable (*milieux de mémoire*) that drove him throughout the later years of his life to write books, essays and other publications (*lieux de mémoire*) – this and his unabiding sympathy for Iran, its culture and people.¹⁰²

The young Friedrich Rosen, who grew up in Jerusalem in the 1850s and 1860s, had little idea of the accelerating technological modernisation that had already begun to integrate the Levant and the broader Middle East of his childhood into global economy and world politics. Rosen had lived in a mechanised world in Germany, but his ancestral Detmold was only connected to the railway

100 Sven Beckert, “Das Reich der Baumwolle. Eine globale Geschichte,” in *Das Kaiserreich Transnational. Deutschland in der Welt 1871–1914*, Sebastian Conrad and Jürgen Osterhammel (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 280–301.

101 “European political rule and European enterprise, to which all countries apart from little remnants have become addicted, have already now destroyed most of which, that made up the appeal and the poetry of the Orient, and are busy also obliterating the last traces of everything medieval-romantic... Following my youth education and my later studies I was able to see cities of many humans and to perceive their dispositions before also they are squelched in the great all-levelling mills into colourless dust.” Friedrich Rosen, 1926, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte I*, Abschrift, 6 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA.

102 Pierre Nora, “Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux de Mémoire*,” trans. Marc Roudebush, *Representations* 26 (1989): 7, 21.

grid in 1890 and had suffered from underemployment and emigration for most of the nineteenth century. His first conscious encounter with rapidly changing cultures had been in India, where he had observed imports of cheaper Manchester textiles replacing local manufacturing and with that clothing customs. Another cultural interruption Rosen noticed during his year and a half in India was rural flight and the disintegration of time-honoured forms of social cohesion.¹⁰³ Travelling through British dominated southern Iran on his way back from India, Rosen observed with regret the impact of international trade that replaced vegetable dyes in Iranian carpet making by aniline dyes: “But the representatives of the countries which produce aniline dyes were charged to oppose any restriction laid upon their introduction”.¹⁰⁴

During his years in the diplomatic service in Iran, Rosen then came to study in detail and report back to Berlin on the basic structures of Iranian economy and finances, and how the imperial encroachment of Russia and Great Britain resulted in oppressive treaties, concessions that prevented development, the breaking away of internal productivity amid external competition, resulting in trade deficits and budget gaps, to be serviced through loans in exchange of further productivity impairing concessions. A few years later, sitting bored in hot Baghdad, which acquaintances in Berlin fantasised about in the style of *A Thousand and One Nights*, Rosen pondered on the disruptive effects the exploitation of oil and the extension of the Baghdad railway to the Persian Gulf would have on the lives of nomads and their poetic forms.¹⁰⁵ Mechanised modernity was not without setbacks, as the disillusioned Jalal al-e Ahmad would come to argue in decrying the alienating effects of “machine-struckness” that underpinned his 1962 analysis of *Gharbzadegi* (weststruckness).¹⁰⁶

A people alienated from themselves; in our clothing, shelter, food, literature, and press... We educate pseudo-westerners and we try to find solutions to every problem like pseudo-westerners... once the machine makes its appearance in a village, it completely destroys all of the relations between the pastoral and village economies.¹⁰⁷

Due to the conflicting interests of Iran’s mighty neighbours Russia and Britain, infrastructure construction was largely blocked until well into the Constitutional

103 Friedrich Rosen, *Indarsabhā des Amānat*, V, 28; Meier, *Lippen unterwegs*, 38.

104 Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 52.

105 Friedrich Rosen, 1898, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte II*, 7 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 122–143.

106 Jalal al-e Ahmad, *Plagued by the West (Gharbzadegi)*, trans. Paul Sprachman (Delmor: Caravan, 1982), 3–7.

107 al-e Ahmad, *Gharbzadegi*, 33, 45.

period in Iran. This meant that the mode of travel in 1887 and when Rosen returned in the 1890s was caravans and the somewhat faster chapar postal horse service. For centuries a “culture of equestrianism”, as Kasheni called it, had been at the centre of economy and political power in the region. An avid equestrian himself, Rosen provided detailed descriptions of the various horse-based riding systems in his *Shuma Farsi härf mizänid?* and later noted that he had started translating Omar Khayyam and other Persian poetry while crossing Iran on horseback. He proudly rode a Turkmen horse, “By most accounts,” according to Kasheni, “these breeds were beautiful and much sought after. Long, slender, and sinewy in stature, Turkmen horses thrived on the dry grass of the desert and were well known for their fleetness and endurance on long marches and through the steppes.” In Mesopotamia and Syria and elsewhere Rosen observed caravans, the different types of camels used for transportation, and the cultural practices surrounding horses and donkeys, the role skilled horseback riding played for social recognition among his peers, and how to approach nomads in the desert when on horseback to avoid conflictual situations. In Baghdad the only respite from his boredom was studying the market prices of studs and mares.¹⁰⁸

By the time Rosen became consul in Jerusalem the railway had reached up into the Judean Hills, and Rosen found the city doubled in size and Palestine no longer quite the Old Testament scenery he had remembered from his childhood days. Riding his stud Nimr (tiger) down to Jericho, the Dead Sea and into Syria with Nina and visiting Gertrude Bell, he likely thought back to the day he had suffered a heat-stroke on his way down to the Jordan as a boy, when he was nursed back to strength by Bedouin tribesmen, who rode “with long lancers in their hands on stately steeds” and danced with their weapons into the night around a camp-fire.¹⁰⁹ Not as if Rosen did not enjoy railway-travel and its comforts. In a newspaper article he wrote in India, his thick description of the railway journey from Calcutta climbing up the mountains at undiminished speed to Darjeeling reads with wonder of mechanic achievement. Most striking perhaps was Rosen’s observation of Shah Mozaffar ed-Din repeatedly asking for the train to be slowed down to 30 km/h on the way from Basel to Potsdam, as the Shah was “afraid” of higher speeds. Railway travel was efficacious and fascinat-

108 Friedrich Rosen, 1898, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte II*, 7 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 122, 143–150; Family Photographs, ASWPC; Friedrich Rosen, *Neupersischer Sprachführer*, 37; Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 42–72; Khazeni, “Pastoralism and Equestrian Culture,” 136–39.

109 Fink, “Kindheit und Jugend Rosen,” 139; Gertrude Bell, *Diary Entry*, 23 January 1900, GBA NU; Gertrude Bell to Hugh Bell, 11 February 1900, GBA NU.

ing, but its high speed was to those unaccustomed scary, and unsettled older modes of travelling.¹¹⁰ While the Ottomans were seen in Europe as the sick man, from Baghdad Rosen saw the Turkish policy of binding and disciplining tribes and nomads with the help of moving troops via railway as a “cultural power striving after establishing order and tranquillity” – even as he revelled in the protocol of hospitality, poetic jousting with the Tayy tribe on the Iraqi-Iranian border and a stay with the nomadic Lurs on his way to Tehran. Rosen inquired rhetorically in a letter to his brother Hareth:

Wie lange wird alle diese Poesie in der arabischen Welt noch weiterbestehen? Die Bagdad-bahn wird den Bewohnern des Landes viel Gutes bringen, aber auch mit vielem Alten und Schönen aufräumen. Ich sehe schon den Sohn des Scheichs Salman aus dem Stamme Hatim Tais auf einer kleinen Station als Bahnhofsinspektor mit der roten Mütze!¹¹¹

Still before the war, the Baghdad and Hejaz railways rapidly accelerated transportation, changing travel, interaction customs and political control in the Ottoman Empire. The fall of the Russian Empire brought to an end crippling concessions that had prevented transportation upgrades in Iran, and the emergence of the United States as a global actor with an emphasis on automotive and airplane travel further tied Iran into global transportation routes. Where Rosen once had treaded on horse, meeting other travellers, caravans, pilgrims and nomads, evaded highway robbery, traded and translated poetry, now oil was being exploited, industrial goods handled on grand scale and tourism spread. As “the singular working team” of man and horse was dissolved, the “era of horses” came to an end in more and more places over all over the world.¹¹² By 1926 Rosen summarised: “Verlassene Karawanenwege sind zu verkehrsreichen Automobilstraßen geworden. Flugzeuge durchmessen in wenigen Stunden Entfernungen, zu deren Überwindung Wochen gehört hatten.”¹¹³

110 Friedrich Rosen, *Besuch Schah Muzaffar eddin*, 1920s, 1 NL Müller-Werth 1199/34, HHStAW; Schivelbusch, *Geschichte der Eisenbahnreise*.

111 “How long will all this poetry in the Arabi world continue to exist? The Baghdad railway will bring much good to the inhabitants of the land, but will also turn out much of the old and beautiful. I already see the son of the Sheikh Salman from the tribe of Hatim Tay standing at a small station as station inspector with his red cap!” Friedrich Rosen, 1898, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte II*, 7 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 122–130.

112 Ulrich Raulff, *Das letzte Jahrhundert der Pferde. Geschichte einer Trennung* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2015), 11–18.

113 “Abandoned caravan routes have become busy automobile streets. Airplanes cover distances in a few hours that used to take weeks to surmount.” Friedrich Rosen, *Persien in Wort und Bild*, 6.

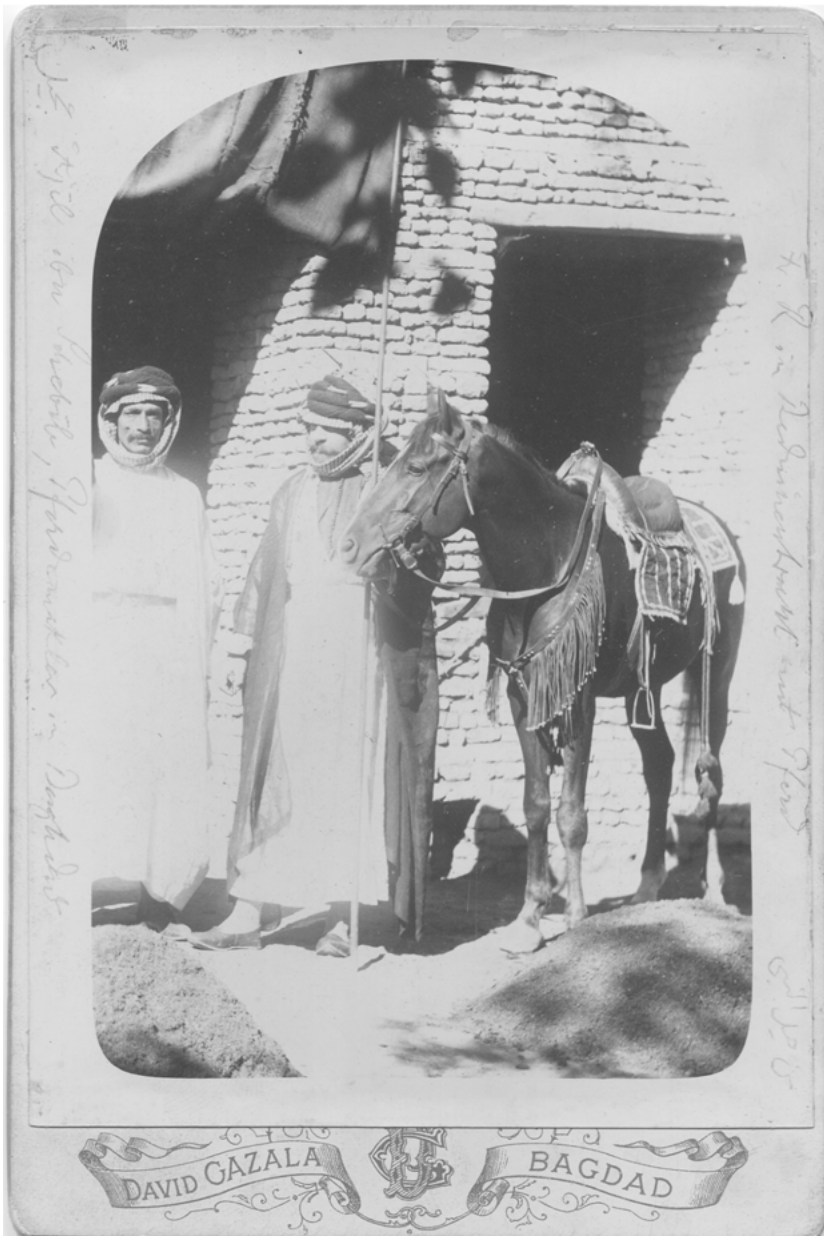


Fig. 8.3. "Ajil ibn Shebib, horse trader in Baghdad – Friedrich Rosen in Beduin outfit with horse – From the horses of the prophet." Rosen posing in the summer of 1898 with his Arab horse, whose lineage was traced back to one of the five favourite mares of the prophet Muhammad.

On his way from Bushehr to Shiraz in 1887, Rosen spoke with locals about the telegraph lines introduced by the British Telegraph Company, inquiring if the speed of communication was “not very wonderful?” An elderly man, who had sent a cable to his brother from Shiraz to Isfahan, answered soberly that Rosen should “imagine a very long greyhound which you pinch in the tail and who howls from its head.”¹¹⁴ With a sense of admiration Rosen noted that many Iranians met such technological novelties utterly unfazed. He also found his Iranian philosophical sparring partners looking upon Western philosophy with its emphasis on the material as rather banal. Nevertheless, Western methods and ideas had entered Iran for decades already. Newspapers, lithographic book publications, photography and western style education at Tehran’s Dar al-Fonun, not to speak of personal interactions in the imperial contexts, all impressed European ways upon Iran and were often readily and enthusiastically adopted.

On the one hand these modernising tendencies, expressed in Malkom Khan’s publication of the *Qanun* newspaper out of London, encounters with teachers of Dar al-Fonun or considerations of reform of the Sadr Azam Amin as-Sultan had already found recognition in Rosen’s writings back in the 1890s. Even in what he looked upon as forlorn Baghdad, where he failed to find quite the same intellectual stimulus as in Tehran, Rosen noted that the coffee houses along the Euphrates were full with as much informed chatter about world affairs as anywhere in Europe. On the other hand Rosen thought that in Iraq the logical sequence of cause and effect was not widely accepted and bemoaned the hygiene standards and public medical education during the cholera outbreak in Tehran in 1892.¹¹⁵ That European doctors, such as the German legation doctor in Tehran, Oskar Werth, were equally appreciated by him and his wife, as by his Iranian friend Zahir ed-Dowleh and other people at the court went hand in hand with Rosen’s frustration when confronted by the obstinate insistence of his neighbours to wash the cholera infested bodies of their deceased relatives in the same brook that served as a source of drinking water: “In vain did I try to explain to them what we know about microbes in unboiled water.”¹¹⁶ When riding from Luristan into Iran he gave his ill groom a sip of cognac against the inflammation. He spat it out and died several days later.

“Ich bedauerte, daß ich ihm nicht mehr Medikament und Pflege hatte angedeihen lassen, aber alle Perser und Araber erklärten einstimmig, daß das unnütz gewesen wäre. Die To-

114 Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 52–53.

115 Friedrich Rosen, 1898, Hinterlassene Manuskripte II, 7 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA.

116 Friedrich Rosen, *Oriental Memories*, 171.

deskunde sei dem Menschen am Tage der anfanglosen Ewigkeit vorherbestimmt und wenn diese komme, dann helfe keine Arznei.”¹¹⁷

Rosen’s assessments of Islamic fatalism and Oriental removal from the material realities of the world, while acclaiming an evolutionary theory expressed in Rumi’s poetry that pre-dated modern European natural scientists Darwin and Haeckel by centuries, were two poles of his fluctuating thought.¹¹⁸ While finding that the mystical removal from the natural world in Sufi Islam stood at the centre of the Islamic world’s slow or absent development, Rosen experienced similar overpowering moments that left him perhaps not fatalist, but seeking refuge in Sufi practices.

These ambivalent tendencies between materialist science and metaphysical truth surfaced again in the 1920s. When discussing the manuscript of the arguably oldest known *Ruba’iyat* of Omar Khayyam that he had obtained from Oheimb-Kardorff, Rosen concluded his response to the question as to the authenticity of the *Ruba’iyat* – without having come to a definitive answer – with the words: “Wir müssen bei dem Bekenntnis bleiben, daß Gott allein der Kenner des Verborgenen ist.”¹¹⁹ As rising German Orientalists Schaefer and Ritter postulated Khayyam’s name should be struck from the canon of Persian poetry, lacking further evidence of the philosopher having actually been the author of the *Ruba’iyat*, Rosen’s embrace of ambivalence and anti-positivist inklings drew negative responses in Orientalist circles with a reviewer of his *Quatrains of Omar Khayyam* rejecting the work, because Rosen did “not advance our knowledge very greatly”.¹²⁰ Out of frustration over a academic and moral decline in 1920s Germany, due to disappointed hopes he may have had for some of the places in the Middle East he had seen before empiricist modernity broke in, or merely because he began to perceive of such scientific questions as mundane games given the transience of life, the elderly Friedrich Rosen of the 1920s entertained a contentious relationship with the value and purpose of western science in comparison to Persian philosophy and poetry.

117 “I regretted that I had not provided more medicine and care for him, but the Persians and Arabs all declared in unison that it would have been futile. The death call had been preordained for the man on the day of the beginningless eternity and when it came there was no remedy.” Friedrich Rosen, 1898, *Hinterlassene Manuskripte II*, 7 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA, 130.

118 Rosen and Rosen, *Mesnevi*, 18; Friedrich Rosen, *Harut und Marut*, 43–44.

119 “We must stay with the avowal that it is God who knows the concealed.” Friedrich Rosen, “Textfrage der Vierzeiler,” 298.

120 S., “Khayyam by Friedrich Rosen,” 459.

Rosen's relationship with modernity between Europe and the East was further complicated when it came to trade, business relations and economic development. While he had in his doctoral dissertation on the *Indar Sabha* already mentioned in passing the impairments European development brought to Indian cultures, upon returning to Berlin he held a couple of rather cautious talks about investment prospects for German businesses in the sub-continent. As a teacher at the SOS he was also charged with educating German merchants about market opportunities in far-away places. Quite in line with the prevalent *pénétration pacifique* doctrine of European powers – including Germany – his 1897 consular exam analysed the economic structure of Iran and how German companies might best go about business there with the help of a future German consulate at Bushehr. Rosen's essay circulated widely among Berlin ministries and a year later a consulate was in planning. Working on the Orient desk in the *Auswärtiges Amt* in the early 1900s Rosen then became involved in the political expedition of the Baghdad railway, and in Morocco Rosen struggled to gain mining rights and a series of other advantages for German firms seeking to penetrate the Moroccan market.

The argument offers itself that the strictures of making a career in the economically bulging German Empire would have left Rosen with little other choice but to cater to the wishes of German business interests while a diplomat. A trade mark that he maintained throughout his politically active decades was laying an emphasis on cultural understanding, including a proper command of language and literature, as a necessity for doing business successfully in places like Iran, Turkey or India.¹²¹ Quite in line with official imperial German policy in the Orient, Rosen fended for the free access of German businesses to foreign markets. Rosen may have been sceptical regarding the prospects and ramifications of trade and development in the countries he served in, particularly in the cut-throat imperialist scramble that intensified into the Great War.

It is likely though that Rosen believed until the early 1900s that the Germany he represented was an able political actor on the international stage, an honest arbiter, with the paramount interest of getting trade access for its companies and that he could through his interventions and advice work towards some sort of culturally appropriate development. At some point between seeing the potential ramifications of the Baghdad railway for Iraq, the botched Morocco crisis, the futile attempts to get the Mannesmann brothers mining rights without provoking

121 Friedrich Rosen, "Indiens Handelsverbindungen mit Zentral-Asien"; Friedrich Rosen, "Wissenschaftliche Arbeit zum Konsulatsexamen"; Friedrich Rosen, "Gotthard Jäschke und Erich Pritsch. Die Türkei seit dem Weltkriege 1918–1928," *ZDMG* 84 (9), no. 1/2 (1930): 108.

major hostilities from France, and the Great War, these positive notions about trade and progress dissipated. In Iran, Rosen's opposition towards foreign economic involvement was still minimal, and mostly targeted at the oppressive contracts Russia forced on the Qajars. But free trade, economic and administrative reform appeared at least a remote possibility to deliver Iran from perennial crisis. Internationalising trade also had been one of a number of driving factors behind the German mission to Ethiopia – and appeared to work initially in this case. In Morocco Rosen no longer saw the policies of the European powers aimed at veritable development, even as he worked on behalf of German businesses. What was written about in European press as riots endangering the safety of European merchants was perceived by Rosen as primarily instigated by European powers for furthering their own goals in the country.¹²²

In 1920, Wilhelm Litten scathingly described how the “peaceful” economic penetration into Iran led to the kindling of ever more foreign economic and political interests, foreign staff entering the Iranian government, reliance on unfair loans, and eventually binding the country for the establishment of a protectorate or foreign annexation.¹²³ Rosen would have shared his acquaintance's analysis. These long-winded developments culminated when Rosen visited Istanbul in 1919 and saw the destruction and chaos the war had wrought upon the city. It was the “rupture of Rosen's life”, in the words of his cabinet colleague Schiffer:

“Rosen stellte fest, dass das türkische Volk sein Wesen durch den Weltkrieg und die durch ihn herbeigeführte nähere Berührung mit Westeuropa vom Grund aus und zum Schlechteren verändert habe... [Er sah] künstliche Industrialisierung... Vergeudung von technischen Kräften... und moralisches Korumpieren des Volkes”.

Rosen told Schiffer that he had “abgeschlossen” (~ gotten closure) with the Orient.¹²⁴

A manuscript that went missing from Rosen's collection on Iranian history during the eighteenth and nineteenth history leaves us to in speculation as to his analysis of how Iran declined and fared under the pressing influence of England and Russia. In his “Einfluß geistiger Strömungen auf die politische Ge-

122 Friedrich Rosen, *Auswärtiges Amt. Marokkokrise*, 303–4.

123 Litten, *Persien “pénétration pacifique”*, III.

124 “Rosen noted that the Turkish people had fundamentally changed its character for the worse due to the war and the through the war caused closer contact with Western Europe... He saw artificial industrialisation... squandering of technical forces... and moral corruption of the people.” Eugen Schiffer to Herbert Müller-Werth, 6 September 1948, 12 NL Müller-Werth, PA AA.

schichte Persiens” (influence of intellectual currents on the political history of Iran) Rosen only mentions that after the disintegration of the Safavid Empire, some of Iran’s lost glory re-emerged under the Qajar Shah Feth ‘Ali (reign 1797–1834), that Naser ed-Din Shah’s rule saw “inner tremors” with the persecution of the Babis and Bahais, and that Iran had in the post-war period once again become completely independent.¹²⁵ A number of other writings of Rosen from the 1920s portray his stance towards imperialism and nationalism in the countries he had seen during his diplomatic career.

In a review of Hans Kohn’s 1931 *Nationalismus und Imperialismus im Vorderen Orient*, Rosen concurred with Kohn’s analysis of the conflict of European imperialist ambitions in the Near East and the “peoples of the Orient, that were themselves striving for their independence and modern development.” Kohn and Rosen shared a belief in the legitimacy of the self-determination of Oriental states and saw nationalism as a way out of ever recurring conflicts, but Rosen doubted the practicability of the “parliamentary forms” advocated by Kohn.¹²⁶ Taking his cue from an early 1931 London round table conference of leading Indian political figures and the British administration, with Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Patel in prison, Rosen displayed sympathies towards the demands of the Indian nationalists, who fought against British subjugation, but noted that the plethora of languages spoken on the subcontinent, a Hindu-Muslim divide and the unresolved issue of Indian principalities would lead to conflicts in the foreseeable future.¹²⁷ Rosen saw fewer comparable problems arise in Iran, as Persian culture was a dominant force all across the Iranian plateau and with the prevalence of the Shi’ite faith unifying Iranians, Turks and other peoples into one nation, as had been the case under the Safavids.¹²⁸

Rosen had encountered European imperial practice during his time in Tehran, and if he had not perceived British and Russian interference in Iran as hegemonic patronising then, with German interests more ostensibly losing out dur-

125 Friedrich Rosen, “Geistige Strömungen,” 124.

126 Contrary to Mangold-Will’s description that Rosen remained silent on Turkey after 1923, he did touch upon the country in his review of Kohn’s book and in giving a positive review of the pro-Atatürk *Die Türkei seit dem Weltkriege* by Gotthard Jäschke and Erich Pritsch in 1930. Friedrich Rosen, “Nationalismus und Imperialismus”; Kohn, *Nationalismus und Imperialismus im Vorderen Orient*; Mangold-Will, *Begrenzte Freundschaft*, 462; Friedrich Rosen, “Die Türkei seit dem Weltkriege 1918–1928”; Gotthard Jäschke and Erich Pritsch, *Die Türkei seit dem Weltkriege. Geschichtskalender 1918–1928* (Berlin: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Islamkunde, 1929).

127 Friedrich Rosen, “Die Konferenz am Runden Tisch über die Zukunft Indiens,” *Preussische Jahrbücher* 224, no. 1 (1931): 1–7.

128 Friedrich Rosen, “Geistige Strömungen,” 111.

ing similar developments in 1900s Morocco, the similarities became all too palpable. When asked by Müller-Werth in 1932 about the Rif rebel Mulai Ahmed er-Raisuni aka Raisuli, the bandit and kidnapper of westerners, Rosen replied, “When you are declared brigand chief by the European powers, there is little you can do about it”.¹²⁹ While the “place in the sun” policy was what Rosen had to carry out as a diplomat in Wilhelmian Germany, his anti-imperial positioning in the Weimar days evolved from more acquiescent views after all pretences of German Empire and the slim likelihood that Germany was any better than its European neighbours were sufficiently disappointed. Litten’s outcry was probably not too far off from Rosen’s state of mind:

Aus verständnislosen, zinsgierigen Pharisäern sind wir mitempfindende Leidensgefährten geworden. So wie wir jetzt am Boden liegen, siech, krank, verhungert, aus Wunden eiternd und blutend, von äußeren und inneren Krankheiten zerfressen, an Fett, Fleisch, Brot, Kohlen und Nerven Mangel leidend, unseren Siegern ausgeliefert mit der einzigen Hoffnung, daß ein Funke von Verständnis und menschlichem Gefühl bei ihnen noch übrig geblieben sein möge, genau so lag auch Persien, aber seit Jahrzehnten hoffnungslos vor uns, vor Europa und Amerika.¹³⁰

Friedrich Rosen had not quite “abgeschlossen” after his trip to Istanbul in 1919. Instead, he became involved in Iranian nationalism. Already before the war, nationalist movements had developed across the Orient, with Iran’s Constitutional Revolution a case in point. The European empires had suffered the material and moral consequences of the war and showed signs of imperial overreach. With US president Woodrow Wilson’s 1918 promulgation of national self-determination becoming a central principle for international relations and similar calls coming out of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin’s Soviet Union, the 1920s saw a proliferation of nationalist and socialist projects across Europe and the wider Middle East. The nationalist currents Rosen came in contact with most were the Iranians who had started coming to Berlin during the war and were like a number of other revolu-

129 Herbert Müller-Werth, 2. Besuch beim Reichsaußenminister a.D. Dr. Friedrich Rosen, 17 July 1932, report, 2 NL Müller-Werth 1199/34, HHStAW.

130 “We have gone from uncomprehending, interest-greedy Pharisees to compassionate companions in suffering. Like we are now lying on the ground, infirm, sick, starved, ulcerating and bleeding from our wounds, eaten up by external and internal maladies, in want of fat, meat, bread, coal and nerves, at the mercy of our vanquishers with the only hope that a spark of understanding and humane sentiment may have stayed with them,—exactly like that Persia lay, but for decades hopelessly in front of us, in front of Europe and America.” Litten, *Persien “pénétration pacifique”*, 370–71.

tionary or reformist groups congregating around newspapers, publishing houses, and social clubs in the exuberantly downtrodden German capital.

As Kurzman noted, in international law countries were only granted full status when they were considered on par with the European powers, or when a nation was considered civilised enough. While a country like Iran was considered sovereign, its level of civilisation was deemed too low for the same status as western powers under international law, making it important for countries outside of Europe to prove their national-civilisational credentials to be accepted into the “family of nations”, legally and otherwise.¹³¹ Iran had to develop, civilise and modernise, to gain the symbolic capital needed on the international stage to ensure independence, which was also seen as a *sine qua non* for the economic development that would bring sufficient power to throw off the shackles of western domineering. Rosen’s positioning on the Iranian nation in these regards from 1921 to 1935 followed a rule of three: 1) Iran was already modern, 2) Iran should not over-modernise and Europeanise, and 3) Iran should rather connect to its own past and develop its sciences, culture and society organically.

Stressing Iran’s modernity was something Rosen did mostly in addressing European audiences. In a keynote lecture to the Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft in 1922 he declared: “Das persische Volk aber hat sich nach vielen Kämpfen und Mühen zu den neueren Ideen emporgerungen. Bei dieser Gelegenheit hat es die Welt überrascht durch die große Anzahl echter Patrioten und ehrlicher Volksfreunde...”¹³² In Rosen’s reading, Afghanistan and India should also be understood as modern nations. As proof Rosen mentioned that the Iranian prime minister Mohammad Foroughi had translated Descartes’s *Discours de la méthode* to Persian, that Malkom Khan had already called for law-based and representative forms of government in the nineteenth century, that prior to his assassination in 1929 King Amanullah was rapidly imprinting western forms in Afghanistan, and that Iranian and other non-European students were studying along the lines of Western education and many had come to Germany to learn there. The encounter with the Iranians studying natural sciences, medicine and other sufficiently modern topics in Berlin and publishing articles and books on a wide array of topics, as well as Rosen’s own collaboration with Taqi Erani on mathematics and chemistry related topics, allowed him to praise the modernity of Iran with conviction. Rosen was not of one mind with those in

131 Charles Kurzman, “Weaving Iran into the Tree of Nations,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 37, no. 2 (2005): 154–56.

132 “But after many battles and struggles the Persian people has broken forth to the newer ideas. On this occasion it has surprised the world with its great number of real patriots and honest friends of the people...” Friedrich Rosen, “Geistige Strömungen,” 124.

the Kaviani circles who, like Taqizadeh, wanted to completely modernise Iran along European models and shed all Iranian culture. The related ideology of the return of Iran to its pre-Islamic and pre-Arabic roots and pseudo-Sasanian chauvinist revival, which was pursued by Pourdavoud, were also not up Rosen's alley. But he overlapped with the line of *Iranshahr* that favoured a study of the Occident and a selection of useful European elements that Iran could adapt. While *Iranshahr* was produced under the impression of a crisis-struck Europe and moral decline following the war, and advocated a re-orientation to the East, Rosen rather remained a man of the pre-modern Orient. Without ever having returned to Iran he was stuck in the Qajar era, even as he was facilitating the work of those rapidly creating competing visions for a new Iran.

The past Iran he held up high was the “romantic-medieval”, and Rosen assigned to this original Iran rather than to that of pre-Islamic antiquity an intrinsic value. The medieval, that Rosen saw in Iran, was the “historical nation” of Iran reaching back to the Safavid period (sixteenth to eighteenth century) and to the enlightened eras of Islam's golden age before.¹³³ Rosen celebrated the glorious culture of the Safavids and its 600,000 inhabitant large capital Isfahan, honorifically and poetically called “nesfe jahan” (half the world). He reached further back to the Shirazi poets Hafez (fourteenth century) and Sa'di (thirteenth century), to the Sufi Rumi (thirteenth century), the philosopher Omar Khayyam, the religious scholar al-Ghazali, the Isma'ili scholar Nasir Khusraw and the grandmaster of philosophy Avicenna (all between the tenth and twelfth century). This was not a worked through corpus of national heroes, although it could certainly be read as one, or a particularly stringent spatial or temporal study of poetry, philosophy and spirituality. What Rosen outlined was a rich Iranian heritage to be preserved, valued, revived, adapted and developed to modernity. Rather than myths of return, Rosen invented continuous Iranian traditions.¹³⁴

Central to Rosen's reading of Iran and its “intellectual currents” was on the one hand the centrality of Shi'ite Islamic belief, reverence for the imam 'Ali, the shrines of 'Ali in Najaf, of the imams Hussein and 'Abbas in Kerbala, Kasimein near Baghdad, where the last Imam went into hiding, and the other Imamza-

¹³³ Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, 73.

¹³⁴ Eric J. Hobsbawm, “Inventing Traditions in 19th Century Europe,” in *The Invention of Tradition* (London: Past and Present Society, 1977), 1–25; Pejman Abdolmohammadi, “History, National Identity and Myths in the Iranian Contemporary Political Thought: Mirza Fathali Akhundzadeh (1812–78), Mirza Aqa Khan Kermani (1853–1896) and Hassan Taqizadeh (1878–1970),” in *Perceptions of Iran. History, Myths and Nationalism from Medieval Persia to the Islamic Republic*, Ali M. Ansari (London: I.B. Tauris, 2014), 30.

dehs, that drew pilgrims from across the Shi'ite world.¹³⁵ Aware of the cultural significance assigned to the role of theatre on the ladder of civilisation between Greek and Indian performance arts and a year after Reza Khan Pahlavi had banned the Muharram processions, Rosen noted in his introduction to Litten's compendium of ta'ziya rhapsodies, that the Iranian passion plays, which commemorated the martyrdom of the Imam Hussain at Kerbala, that "Soll die dramatische Literatur der Perser wirklichen Wert haben, so muss sie sich organisch aus dem Märtyrerdrama entwickeln. Die Versuche, durch Übersetzungen von Molière oder dergleichen ein modernes persisches Drama zu schaffen, sind eher eine Störung als eine Unterstützung einer natürlichen Entwicklung."¹³⁶ In contrast to *Iran-shahr's* Kazemzadeh, who thought the religious celebrations and dramatic performances "barbaric", Rosen argued that when it came to dramatic theatre literature, Europe had nothing to offer that came close to the dramatic intensity of the Iranian ta'ziya performances.¹³⁷

Next to these rather orthodox Islamic sources of Iranian culture, unsurprisingly Rosen saw Sufi Islam as a central element from which the Iranian nation should be sourced. Again, he traced this centrality back to the period of the Safavid Empire, which arose out of the alliance a Sufi order had entered with the Turkic Qizilbash tribe. Even as derwish orders subsequently came under attack due to their strong power-basis in the country threatening the new dynasty, Sufi Islam stayed strong at Shah 'Abbas I's (1582–1628) capital Isfahan, where "all the arts and sciences reached the highest perfection".¹³⁸ As the orthodoxy grew stronger in Rosen's analysis – he notes in particular the influence of the Shaykh al-Islam of Isfahan Mohammed Baqir Majlesi (1627–1699)¹³⁹ – the court's "spiritual-intellectual cord" with the Sufi orders was severed. In Rosen's view this was the key cause for the collapse of the Safavid empire. In fact, Sufi Islam was declining in the later years of the Safavid period in the form of derwish orders, but this had more to do with the organisational potential of the derwish orders being perceived as a rivalling force of power by the Shah's court and less with Isfahan losing its intellectual spark. The high-Sufism of intellectuality

135 Friedrich Rosen, "Geistige Strömungen," 111–12.

136 "If the dramatic literature of the Persians shall have real worth, it must develop organically from the martyr drama. The attempts of creating a modern Persian drama by translating Molière or the like are rather disturbances than supporting a natural development." Litten and Rosen, *Drama in Persien*, V; Dabashi, *Theology of Discontent*, 43.

137 Friedrich Rosen, "Geistige Strömungen," 106; Ghahari, *Intellektuellen Kreise*, 185.

138 Rizvi, "A Sufi Theology Fit for a Shā'ī King," 83–86.

139 Rainer Brunner, "Majlesi, Moḥammad-Taqi," *Encyclopædia Iranica*, 20 July 2002. <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/majlesi-molla-mohammad-taqi-b-maqsud-ali-esfahani>.

and philosophy of the likes of Molla Sadra persisted at the court.¹⁴⁰ Other derwishes came to be associated with wine-drinking and promiscuity, leading to the closure of their congregation centre, the tawhid khane (house of unity), which was in Rosen's understanding the main cause for the downfall of the Safavids.¹⁴¹

In this case as in others, Rosen continued to perceive of clerical stringency as an evil that hindered development, as was also showcased by the new edition of the *Sinnsprüche*, which read Khayyam as part of this overarching struggle between orthodoxy and free-thinking: “[Es handelte] sich um einen Ansturm einer engherzigen Orthodoxie gegen das freie Denken und Forschen..., dem Omar als vornehmster Vertreter der reinen Wissenschaft besonders ausgesetzt war.”¹⁴² But Rosen had no sympathies for half-baked European adaptations either. Quite in line with his doctoral dissertation that had dealt with contemporaneous and in Rosen's view authentic Hindustani drama, Rosen saw prospects of “organic” development in the arts, sciences and society in Iran. This would have to come from within and in its own forms, echoing Safi ‘Ali Shah's “Islamic modernism... engulfed within a mystical reading of Islam.”¹⁴³ To Rosen, only if Iran retained and developed its own culture, could it contribute to the concert of nations and the cultural wealth of humanity.

If there was an ideal past to be found in Iran's past that should be emulated, it would have been – in Rosen's exulting reading – Safavid Isfahan. Following the chronicles of Mohammad Ali Hazin Lahiji (1692–1766), a Safavid emigrant to India,¹⁴⁴ Rosen described Isfahan as a place where all branches of theology and the humanities, including mathematics, astronomy, natural sciences, medicine, law, linguistics, poetry, history, geography and much more, were studied to perfection: “It was the ambition of every educated and knowledgeable Persian of that time to grasp the whole range of these studies as completely as possible”. To demonstrate Isfahan's scholarly might, Rosen cited an unidentified Isfahani poet of the time:

An der Schwelle dieser Welt von Weisheit
Ist Griechenland nur wie ein Bettler in Bezug auf wissenschaftliche Begabung.
In jeder Gasse steht ein Aristoteles auf,

140 Rizvi, “Mollā Ṣadrā”; Rizvi, “A Sufi Theology Fit for a Shā‘ī King,” 87.

141 Mitchell, *Politics in Safavid Iran*; Friedrich Rosen, “Geistige Strömungen,” 115.

142 “an onslaught of petty orthodoxy against free thought and research..., which Omar as most gracious representative of the pure science was particularly exposed to.” Friedrich Rosen, *Sinnsprüche* (1930), 10–11.

143 Nile Green, “Safi ‘Ali Shah,” 100.

144 Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Indo-Persian Travels*, 229–30; John R. Perry, “Ḥazin Lāhiji,” *Encyclopædia Iranica* XII, no. 1 (2003): 97–98.

Und bei jedem Schritt stößt man auf einen Plato.
 Der Pöbel Isfahans verfaßt Werke wie die Syntax Megiste von Ptolomäus,
 Ihre Kinder schütteln Werke wie die Enzyklopädie der Wissenschaften von Avicenna aus
 ihrem Ärmel.

On the threshold of this world of wisdom
 Is Greece but a beggar when it comes to scholarly talent.
 In every alley stands an Aristotle,
 And at every step one comes across a Plato.
 The riffraff of Isfahan composes works like the Megiste Syntaxis of Ptolomy.
 Their children churn out works like Avicenna's encyclopaedia of the sciences."

The ideal coexistence of Sufi and orthodox Islam in Isfahan Rosen found demonstrated in a poem by Mirza Mohammad Hossein Vafa Farahani, a politician and poet in the Zand and early Qajar dynasty:

Wende dein Gesicht nicht von der Moschee ab
 und geh' auch an dem Weinhaus nicht vorbei.
 Denn es könnte sein, daß der Ort, wo der Freund
 sich dir offenbart, mitunter hier und mitunter dort wäre.¹⁴⁵

Do not turn away your face from the mosque
 and also do not pass by the wine house.
 As it could be that the place where the friend
 reveals himself to you would once be here and once there.

Figuratively interpreting the wine house as the house of wisdom, Rosen sought a coexistence of the realms of religious spirituality and free philosophy as a point of orientation for modern Iran.

Rosen took this further. The Oriental anecdotes and similes he liked to sprinkle his conversations and memoirs with may appear to have been for popular consumption. To propose undue exoticising merely for stylistic effect is, however, stopping short of what was happening. Rosen had absorbed poetry, not only in Persia or the East but generally, to the point that he thought in poetic terms and conceived of situations and life in lyrical bodies between witticism, philosophical grappling, political and social pedagogy and spiritual retreat. Rosen knew of the effect he had on a German audience when he "mused like a derwish" in public or his writings. An instance that demonstrates his cognitive predisposition while covering up the potentially negative effect of exoticism was in an essay he wrote in 1925 on Germany's position in post-Versailles European politics and the in his view untenable reparations Germany had to pay.

145 Friedrich Rosen, "Geistige Strömungen," 117.

After a defence of his time in government, Rosen traced through the general set up of European politics, portraying how his political thinking was still very much informed by pre-war Realpolitik when he expressed his frustration with the unwillingness of going into an open alliance with the Soviet Union due to bourgeois fears of communist takeover. Rosen also argued that a German peace treaty with China without capitulations signed in 1921 had become a necessity caused by Germany's isolated and weak position, that the parliamentary system made diplomacy near to impossible and that Germany was no longer in a position to pursue goals in Turkey or elsewhere outside Europe.¹⁴⁶ Underlying the general misery, Rosen saw a broken financial system. Citing the minister of finances during the Bourbon restoration, Joseph-Dominique Louis, Rosen noted "Donnez-moi une bonne politique et je vous ferai de bonnes finances." This he followed up by the words of an unidentified medieval thinker of the thirteenth century: "Drei Dinge können ohne drei Dinge nicht bestehen, Wohlstand ohne Handel, Wissenschaft ohne Diskussion und ein Staat ohne Staatskunst." That was Sa'di in his *Gulistan*. Just before those lines Sa'di had written in the original that science shall be pursued for the promotion of religion, not for the purchase of earthly goods.¹⁴⁷ As Rosen had written Andreas, he sought the "finer connection of things" also for Germany. He found them in the thought of thirteenth century Sa'di, but knew that it was wiser in a political tract to not live out his religious inklings or have his argumentation tainted by the flowery East of Sa'di's *Rosengarten*.

The iconisation of Firdowsi's epic *Shahnameh* pursued by such scholars as Nöldeke in his *Iranische Nationalepos* and the imaginative rooting of the modern Iranian nation in a pre-Islamic Sasanian past practiced in the Pahlavi era, stood in contrast to Rosen's veneration of the splendour of Isfahan, and a search for the unity of religion, mysticism, philosophy and the sciences in an Islamic Iranian past.¹⁴⁸ Rosen's aversion to the more jingoist tendencies of the liberal promise and western modernism, that led him to seek out something

¹⁴⁶ Friedrich Rosen, "Deutschlands auswärtige Politik seit dem Verträge von Versailles."

¹⁴⁷ "Three things cannot persist without three things, prosperity without trade, scholarship without discussion and a state without statecraft." Friedrich Rosen, "Deutschlands auswärtige Politik seit dem Verträge von Versailles," 82–83; Philipp Wolff, *Sadi's Rosengarten* (Stuttgart: J. Scheible's Buchhandlung, 1841), 290–91.

¹⁴⁸ Nöldeke, "Das Iranische Nationalepos"; Hans Heinrich Schaeder, "Firdowsi und die Deutschen. Festrede, gehalten bei der Jahrtausendfeier zum Gedächtnis Firdosis zu Berlin am 27. September 1934," *ZDMG* 88 (13) (1934): 118–29; Littmann, "Nachruf. Friedrich Rosen"; Laina Farhat-Holzman, "The Shahnameh of Ferdowsi: An Icon to National Identity," *Comparative Civilizations Review* 44, no. 44 (2001): 104–14; Marashi, "Ferdowsi and the Iranian National Imagination".

more sublime than a material world of conflicts in a heterotopic Iranian past, can partially be explained by the shocks of the war and the post-war period, when Rosen wrote the majority of his works. His encounters with younger Iranians coming to Berlin in the 1920s, trained in critical methods but also portraying hyperwesternised tendencies, further shaped Rosen's positioning as a traditionalist.

Decades earlier, as a young German diplomat, Rosen had been shaped by his encounters with Sufism in the Ni'matullahi order of Safi 'Ali Shah and philosophical debates at the Iranian court. It was no coincidence that Rosen looked for answers to Iran's – and to a degree Germany's – contemporary struggles in a golden Safavid age, when the Ni'matullahi order and the Sufi-philosophers had last ruled supreme. As Rosen thus imagined his own idealised Iranian past, nationalism offered the promise of preserving and developing the original and idiosyncratic Iran that he had found in the intellectual circles of Zahir ed-Dowleh, 'Emad ed-Dowleh and Amin as-Sultan of 1890s Tehran. Or as he concluded his talk on Iranian intellectual currents at the DMG in 1922:

Jeder Freund Persiens, d. h. jeder, der eine Zeitlang im Lande gelebt und seine interessante Geschichte und Kultur studiert hat, jeder der den tiefen philosophischen Geist aus den Werken seiner Dichter und Denker kennengelernt hat, jeder der aus der unerschöpflichen Quelle der persischen Literatur Genuß und Belehrung geschöpft hat, wird dem Lande die Festigung seiner staatlichen Verhältnisse und die Erreichung guter Beziehungen zu seinen Nachbarn von Herzen wünschen. Er wird aber daran noch einen weiteren Wunsch knüpfen, nämlich den, daß bei dem Einzug der neuen Ideen die alten nicht über Bord geworfen werden, daß das persische Volk seine herrliche Literatur weiter pflegen und entwickeln möge. Es wird darin das beste Mittel finden, bei allem Neuen sich doch noch selbst treu zu bleiben und in dem Wechsel der Zeiten seine jahrtausendalte Eigenart fernerhin zu bewahren.¹⁴⁹

149 "Every friend of Persia, that means everybody who has lived in the country for some time and studied its interesting history and culture, everybody who has gotten to know the deep philosophical spirit from the works of its poets and thinkers, everybody who has drawn indulgence and guidance from the inexhaustible source of Persian literature, will from the heart wish the country stabilisation of its state affairs and the achievement of good relations with its neighbours. But he will tie that to another wish, namely that with all the entry of new ideas the old are not tossed overboard, that the Persian people will continue to foster and develop its splendid literature. It will therein find the best means to stay amid all that is new true to itself and keep in the changes of the times its millennia-old uniqueness." Friedrich Rosen, "Geistige Strömungen," 125.

Conclusion

Probing into the relationship between Orient scholarship and politics during the age of German empire along the life, actions, publications and relations of the diplomat-Orientalist Friedrich Rosen unfolds a panoply of interaction types and functions across thematic clusters between the realms of knowledge and power. This book has sought to demonstrate that tangible lines of cause and effect can be drawn between scholarship and knowledge productions more broadly on the one hand and strategising, policy and decision-making, inter-state negotiations, public relations and the prestige-seeking of actors engaged in the political arena on the other. Vice versa power – in its wider spectrum of varying stakeholders of polities pursuing different interests, jostling for influence and driven by an array of ideologies – equally manifests itself in knowledge systems pertaining to research access, financial and security support, thematic focus, the direction of an argument's or a hypothesis' thrust and the influence of knowledge productions on politics, society and culture. Orient scholarship and politics worked together, as much as they worked against each other. No less pertinent were instances of non-interaction. Bodies of knowledge compiled over time, were altered and augmented and amid revisions of thought collectives and political context re-embedded and repurposed. Following Rosen through his personal, political and scholarly engagements between the Jerusalem of his childhood, 1890s Iran, the German imperial foreign service, Orientalist circles, and to the upheavals of multicultural Berlin of the Weimar era, matters of faith were a continuously central force.

Whether because what constitutes politics and what can all be counted towards knowledge production has been kept broad, or because the figure of Friedrich Rosen would by virtue of his characteristics attract within the realm of scholarship its political aspects and be in politics conceived as the savant with special knowledge, little in this dissertation points towards simultaneous developments without interaction. This betrays, however, more the intention to seek out how, why, when and to what end Orient politics and scholarship did interact, than amounting to a comprehensive portrayal of power and knowledge in the age of German empire. Nonetheless, in a few instances this non-interaction showed also in this investigation: Rosen's dissertation on the *Indar Sabha*, no matter how intertwined with empire or constituting a nationalist work, stayed external to German and European scholarly discourse. The rejection of the theme in Oxford by a Hindustani teacher and former military man may have been politically motivated, but in German academia the topic was simply too obscure or vanguard for dominant collective thinking to evoke engagement. Inversely, it is

not only the impractical content of much of Orientalist scholarship that shows vast disconnectedness from politics: think a remote vowel movement in Indo-European languages interesting only to a handful of scholars versus Germany's political and economic ambitions in Asia. Sometimes, as when Friedrich Carl Andreas challenged the Aryan myth at the time of Cyrus with an analysis of "a" and "u" sounds, in retrospect more political attention to these intricacies would have been good.

The prestige accruing to governments from some of these seemingly enigmatic research fields in their usage of ostensibly superior critical philological methodology can plausibly be read as a manifestation of imperial might that discursively weighed down on extra-European countries. Establishing intentionality is, however, a far stretch with regards to many, if not most, of the armchair scholars toiling in their German university settings. The likes of Enno Littmann certainly saw their methodologies as the hottest show around and were often enough possessed by a sense of superiority, but they were not particularly interested in influencing current affairs or discursively subjugating a distant other. Where knowledge was, however, actually practical and these scholars – count among them Oskar Mann, Martin Hartmann or Edward Granville Browne before and during the war – did aim to weigh in on the exercise of power, they were of little influence in informing or swaying political decision-making. Such was the case in some of the propagandised discourses leading up to 1914 – take the outrages surrounding the Morocco crises, the Baghdad railway or Germany's arguably pro-Islam cum pro-Ottoman politics – and particularly during the Great War, when contrarian arguments and evidence provided by Rosen, Bernhard Moritz or Wilhelm Padel were excluded as the positions of Marschall von Bieberstein, Ernst Jaeckh, Carl-Heinrich Becker, and Colmar von der Goltz gained traction and military drums pounded supreme. Max von Oppenheim's pre-war lobbying for a German Pan-Islam strategy was real and the war of words between Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, Becker and John Buchan galvanised some of the soldiers and the bourgeois masses. However, the decisions that drove political and military strategy were made by political actors with little regard for cultural-religious (and other) subtleties, and the jihad propaganda efforts in the Orient were only met with success where sober observation of the situation would suggest likewise. When this happened, as with Klein, this was more coincidental than traceable to central planning.

Institutions of power could and did draw on knowledge productions and those with specialised and arguably superior skill sets and experience, but when push came to shove political actors were driven by pressures and considerations of political-military strategy, intra- and inter-administrative dynamics, public demands, economic resources and individual ambition, partiality, ani-

mosity and strain. The qualified knowledge of more or less professional scholars or “Orientkenner” was just one, often minor factor in such equations of decision-making – for or against friends and foes in the East. Underlying all of these considerations of interaction between knowing and pursuing politics in the Orient were deep-seated limitations of knowing and relaying knowledge. Paul Lincke’s operetta *Im Reich des Indra* being more a product of entertainment market forces than an intended undue exoticisation of the *Indar Sabha* does not mask that accurately and thoroughly understanding what was going on in modern Hindustani drama or in contemporary India was a difficult undertaking for Rosen and a larger German or European audience. In a society that read and celebrated the writings of Karl May and where for many the Ottoman Empire, Morocco or India were still seen as exceedingly far away and Jerusalem located in Egypt, conveying convincing and accurate representations was only complicated by issues inherent to translation between one cultural system of references to another.

It was not that Nina Rosen intended to distort the songs she had heard in Tehran or Fez, but that her transcription into tonal scales for piano was by necessity not going to relay all facets of Iranian or Moroccan classical or folk music at a time when such transcriptions were in their infancy.¹ Rosen’s translations of poetry faced similar issues, when concepts enclosed in a word in Persian, Arabic, Hindustani, Turkish, or Somali were only partially possible to relay in German translation, if rendered word by word. If the poetic qualities of Khayyam, Sa’di, an Arabic qassida or the peace song of Nur Aami were to be conveyed, the meter, rhyme and rhythm demanded further changes. To stay close to the meaning of specific words as part of entire verses and to transport some of a poem’s melody from source to receptive language required a familiarity with both languages and cultures and a literary craftsmanship and artistic mind that to call successfully translated poetry a stroke of genius only rivalling that of the original artwork is not exaggerated. Even if in some of his translations his character shone through more than the original spirit, Rosen was aware of these challenges and took them seriously, as his laborious notebooks and consultations with scholars and poets showed. He made judgement calls, and some of them, like deciding to translate a word as “subjugation” rather than as “piety”, betrayed his own opinions more than reflecting a deep understanding. He pointed out these personal interpretations to his readers. Before the po-

¹ Mohsen Mohammadi, *Musical Souvenirs: European Transcriptions of Persian Music (1600–1910)* (Tehran: Mahoor Institute of Culture and Arts, 2015), 384; Mohsen Mohammadi, “Modal Modernities. Formations of Persian Classical Music and the Recording of a National Tradition,” *CreateSpace* (2017): 45; Mohsen Mohammadi, Personal communication, 3 August 2017.

etry of Hafez, which he included only in excerpts in his *Harut und Marut*, he bowed his head:

“Seine Gedichte sind außerordentlich schwer getreu und in poetischer Form wiederzugeben, weil ihre mystische Bedeutung nicht leicht ohne Kommentar verständlich ist und weil oft kein anderer Zusammenhang zwischen den Versen eines Ghazels besteht als Versmaß und Reim.”²

The ode from his *Divan* that adorns the grand poet’s tomb stone in Shiraz, Rosen translated with the cautionary note:

Trotz mancher Verdeutlichungen des Textes bleibt es fraglich ob viele von denen, welche mit den Gedankengängen der persischen Mystik nicht vertraut sind, die eigenartige Verquickung von sinnlicher und mystischer Liebe und die zum Teil gewollter Mehrdeutigkeit des Sinnes dieses Gedichtes, und damit seine eigenartige Schönheit voll erfassen werden.³

Considering the richness and depth of cultural meanings enveloped in languages, misunderstanding – the belief that one knew while not knowing – of concept such as knowledge, wine or jihad was never far off.

Against these limitations of connectivity between knowledge and power re the Orient stood a multiplicity of processes and characteristics of interaction. Driven by profit-seeking enterprises as much as by political actors that sought to enlarge, integrate and safeguard imperial belongings or to secure profits and livelihoods of those very enterprises, striving for knowledge of the new, old, strange, exotic and potentially enlightening increased massively with the expansion of railway and steamship routes in the nineteenth century. This integration, acceleration and stabilisation of travel was already pertinent during Rosen’s childhood in Jerusalem, when European tourism in the Eastern Mediterranean increased together with immigration to the Holy Land – not only by Jewish and Christian believers from Europe and the Americas but also by Muslims from Asia and Africa like Rosen’s protector Hajji Bekir. Using the same modes

² “His poems are extraordinarily difficult to render loyally and in poetic form, because their mystical meaning is not easily understood without commentary and because often there is no other connection between the verses of a ghazal than the meter and rhyme.” Friedrich Rosen, *Harut und Marut*, 68.

³ “Despite many clarifications of the text it remains questionable, if many of those, who are not accustomed to the trains of thought of Persian mysticism, can fully grasp the idiosyncratic fusion of sensual and mystical love and the sometimes intended ambiguity of this poem’s meaning and therewith its peculiar beauty.” Friedrich Rosen, trans., Ode von Hafiz (Inschrift auf seinem Grabe), ASWPC.

and routes of transportation scholars arrived, who sought to gain a more exact understanding of the Biblical and other antique pasts that would illuminate the origins of mankind. Amid the low strategic significance of the region for Prussia and the limited political capital it could leverage, scholar-consuls like Georg Rosen, Mordtmann senior and junior, Johann Gottfried Wetzstein or Paul Schroeder were the rule rather than the exception in the Ottoman Empire. Many of them fulfilled, next to their own research infused by an immediacy of sources, a facilitating role for European scholars coming through, and in the cases of Rosen senior and Schroeder, equally engaged with the local intellectuals of Jerusalem and Beirut, whether with the Khalidis or at the St. Joseph university.

The integrated transportation network of the British Empire between the British Isles, the Mediterranean and via the Suez Canal to the Indian Ocean and Calcutta and from there up to the Himalayas and across to Northern India and via ship to the Persian Gulf also allowed Rosen to comfortably visit vast lands in less than two years in the 1880s. Without such an integrated transportation system the prevalence of the *Indar Sabha* across regions, religions and cultures in India would have been beyond his grasp. Information about these India routes and how to travel along them was important in itself and found reflection in Rosen's travel guide to Persia in *Shumā Farsī hārf mizānīd*?, which came to inform other travelling scholars and administrators. Similarly, the favourably central location of Copenhagen and Hamburg on international trading routes facilitated the attendance of scholars at the Orientalist Congresses there.

Even as a fair bit of the grandiloquent parlance at these gatherings was parodied in private circles, it behoved the burghers of chimney-grey Hamburg and Copenhagen to shine in the light that Rosen saw with Schiller following the vessels of those exchanging material riches. With the Orient having its intellectual wealth shipped to the Alster mermaid and Hamburg's steamships invigorating a moribund East, some even saw this naval meeting of supposedly materialist Occident and spiritual-intellectual Orient herald the start of a millenarian age. While northern magnates who were in it for the profit, were glad to volunteer their equipment in celebratory somersaults, there were also limits to these infrastructure advantages for scholars. The Baghdad railway management did not comply with the wishes of the scholars to follow rigid scientific council, and while Rosen may have travelled from Baghdad to Tehran via Khaneqin in anticipation of a possible railway branch, the railway and the frontier state Iran were until the 1920s a story of purposeful underdevelopment. As such, Rosen's detailing of caravan travel and the chapar system for travellers from 1890 only necessitated revising for the third edition of *Shumā Farsī hārf mizānīd* in the 1920s, as air travel and the automobile had Iran skip a beat.

Pre-mechanic travel and riding animals remained central elements, just as perceptions, forms and values attached to equestrian cultures palpably faded into oblivion. Rosen's lovely story of having translated the Khayyami *Ruba'iyat* on long horseback journeys may have been magnified, but his notebooks from his Iranian days and his letters from Mesopotamia and Ethiopia, which he did both traverse exclusively on horseback, contain a large number of poems and songs written down while riding. Rosen's actions in politics and his grasping of the world around him were in many ways still firmly rooted in the horse age, when life chickens were offered as gifts of welcome while riding down caravan ways in Ethiopian Galla. Menelik's riding parade created an impressive rush among the German delegation, social bonding was done over tent-pegging and political friendship was signified through gifts of fine green saddles or splendid donkeys, and the Shah's lengthy roaming summer hunting trips stood in contrast to Mozaffar ed-Din's fear of speedy train travel. Rosen delighted in polite forms of riding towards a Bedouin encampment, and the communally structured if not to be romanticised ways of caravan travel created encounters and travel companionship different from those allowed by faster modes of transportation. And Rosen made a show of this "Oriental slowness" for the frightened Europeans of Tangier. Slow pace excursions of Rosen on his "most beloved companion" with Hajji Bekir and his father into the Judean hills underpinned Rosen's comfort and sense of this slow travel being the natural state of affairs.

All these were instances of an extant age of movement in "the Orient", but also in Detmold and other places more closely tied into the modern world. In Rosen's mind the Sheikh of the tribe of Hatem Tai donning the red cap of a railway inspector of the Baghdad railway epitomised the coming of an end of the poetic Orient, underlining the impact that mechanisation wielded on handed down ways of living that to describe simply in terms of functionally categorised parcels of knowledge belie the concrete impact on those affected. It was this sensation that had Rosen mourn in many of his scholarly productions the "romantic" features of a supposedly "medieval" Orient amid a European penetration that had only allowed for his research and that he had contributed to in some of his political actions and knowledge productions. When he did so by citing a contemporary Hindi doha that grappled with the effects of rural flight amid industrialisation as a sign of cultural development or by suggesting to a German post-war audience to learn from the poetic jousting of Nur Aami's Somali peace song, Rosen transcended these forces driving his thought and underlying much of the interactions between scholarship and politics, connecting the old to the new, drawing together Orient and Occident.

There were more direct ways in which the realm of politics influenced Orient scholarship. The creation and sustenance of higher education and institutions to

study the Orient, support for forums of scholarly congregation, and financial backing for everything from a travel bursary to giving a lecture, gaining access to a library, purchasing manuscripts and artefacts, digging up archaeological sites or the payment of living wages – all depended on political will and were in some cases useful for political practice. As the International Orientalist Congresses demonstrated, political will was something that was formed by a number of stakeholders pursuing their individual goals. While European forms of *étatisme* were by contemporaries contrasted to Anglo-American philanthropic tendencies, Hanseatic and Danish bourgeois business support were of as much significance as the support of the British Indian government for a large segment of the Orientalist guild. In the case of the career of Friedrich Carl Andreas, a private donation by the banking brother of the German governor of Samoa Wilhelm Solf only provided the means for the Iranist to travel to the congress in Hamburg that would mark his return to institutional academia.

Financial and other support for research endeavours needed to be garnered in approval processes, for which the backing of other scholars was essential in pressing interests against the needs and desires of political actors. A topic or portfolio of a scholar needed to have self-evident or easily grasped appeal, or come with the sufficient approval of reputable scholars to gain traction. Concurrently, state functionaries, small and large, liked to decorate themselves with the glory of the East and when politically opportune drew on the practical skills scholars had to offer. Next to Oscar II of Sweden, Archduke Rainer of Austria, Frederick VIII of Denmark and Umberto I of Italy, Kaiser Wilhelm was just one hereditary European ruler who for reasons of symbolic ornamentation and personal interest saw it prudent to support national scholars and/or Orient scholarship at large. There was, however, a concrete disconnect between much of the scholarship and topics of conversations discussed at the “great seats of Orientalism” and the knowledge bodies of practical European foreign politics in the extra-European world. The linguistic survey run by the Indian government stood alone in concrete practicality, and even that did not seek to explore Hindustani. A comprehensive new Persian dictionary may have been useful for foreign affairs, but Orientalists into antiquity did not see the need. Similarly, the international Chinese compendium did not take off, just like a number of other suggestions of more or less value to practical affairs did not come about. Hamburg’s promotional waving with a section on colonial wares fell through, just like Olga Lebedeva found little support for her women’s rights activism among Islamists like Ignaz Goldziher, who did not follow the view that women were roundabout discriminated in Islam. Scholars could be unobliging.

Scholarship could also work hand in hand with politics. Political actors were interested in information, and not only in Germany was the diplomatic corps

seeking out ways to better navigate in foreign cultural milieus. The Seminar für Orientalische Sprachen was just one institute that sought to better prepare diplomats, administrators, military figures and merchants for a world that may have seemed up for grabs, but still necessitated knowledge to be penetrated and mastered. Even as high imperialism saw increasingly assertive and boisterous foreign politics emerge and extra-European states, societies, cultures and individuals often came under political and cultural oppression, knowledge seeking persisted not only in the service of power and imposition but also for its own goals. Practical and contemporary forms of knowledge became more prevalent, but despite the rise in prominence of ethnology, the study of the history of religions and the expansion literature studies, philology and the study of the ancients did not simply go away. Neither did scholarship simply submit to the vagaries of politics.

The studying of Persian language and literature by Europeans had been a habit passed down from the time when it was the *lingua franca* for much of the Asian continent and beyond. Next to interested scholars or bored gentle folks like Edward FitzGerald, diplomats and imperial administrators like Arthur Nicolson, Durand or the Dufferins continued to find it politically prudent and socially chic to study some of the Persian poets. Hindustani and Persian being taught from the outset at the SOS mirrored this long-standing prevalence, even as Hindustani went out with Rosen shortly after. By sponsoring social drama performances aimed at reform and by studying Hindustani Lady Dufferin hoped to increase her personal appeal to drive her medical philanthropical work and solidify British rule in India. Some of these Europeans even found that beyond nightingales and roses Sa'di, Rumi, Hafez, Firdowsi and Khayyam had a fair bit to say about politics, social interactions and philosophy. In the vein of Goethe they belonged to the canon of world literature to people like Rosen, Browne and Christensen; or as Rosen had it they formed part of the “chains” tying together human thought since time immemorial.

The German foreign service was not alone in seeing the potential that an elegant address and easy polite conversation referencing to these and other cultural codes could bring for leaving a positive impression and information gathering. In his consul's exam Rosen suggested that the studying of Persian literary language would be the only way for Germans to subsist in Iran without the backup of the German state, as this would show Iranians that no harm was intended. More sinisterly, effective political manipulation was also better done by political or business actors who knew the language of their target, understood socio-cultural etiquette and knew the lay of the land. It was no coincidence that Jalal al-e Ahmad decried the practice in his *Gharbzadegi* in noting that the Orientalist “can jazz up the sales pitch with a little Persian poetry and win the hearts of faithful clients who will exclaim, “See! Did you hear that? He speaks such good Persi-

an!”⁴ Rosen’s low-level tapping into information channels in Tehran during the 1890s demonstrated the promise of such specialised knowledge just as much as his more or less successful conduct during his encounters with Shah Mozaffar ed-Din Shah, Negus Menelik II and Sultan ‘Abd al-‘Aziz and their entourages. As counterpoint, the haphazard application of factoid knowledge to outweigh hard geo-strategic considerations or the mal-comprehension of foreign languages and concepts such as jihad or caliphate also showed the limits of such learning. A long stretch separated the immersed understanding of Islam of someone so intellectually well-equipped and favourably disposed as Ignaz Goldziher and the political-militaristic conceptions of others. Sometimes the absence of concrete knowledge of a place, its peoples and ways, as was the case with Rosen in Ethiopia, was outweighed by the realisation of one’s ignorance and the acquired skill of dealing with differences generally.

Aside from *idéés fixes*, the knowledge of decision-makers and scholars was not stable, but continuously cognitively processed. Previous impressions let actors see things and people in a pre-arranged light. Encountering Ras Makonnen, Rosen was reminded of the fine manners of Persian notables, a positive that made easy approach facile for Rosen. The German envoy was also cognisant that routine travellers were better suited for expeditions, and the long journey from Djibouti to Addis Ababa served to familiarise the German delegation to its surroundings and increase chances of a successful stay with the Ethiopian royal court. Similarly, the Persian delegation of Mozaffar ed-Din Shah sought to maximise their chances of getting more out of their trip to Germany than an awkward encounter by pressing the sympathetic and culturally adroit for Rosen to facilitate their stay. It was not entirely unsuccessful, even if expectations may have been too high.

Forms of passive, cognitive knowledge were also at work when Rosen saw himself reminded of his childhood in Jerusalem when first entering Isfahan in 1887, in his contrasting of the intellectual boredom he experienced in Baghdad to the stimulus he had found in Tehran, and for international politics perhaps most significantly, in his fearlessness in a Moroccan environment in which fright was the European norm and cordial interactions seen as reckless and a civilisational travesty. Rosen first perceived of the centuries of scholarship and high thought of Morocco’s capital Fez, and Raisuli was perhaps not a Götz von Berlichingen, but a potent political player and someone with political-religious legitimacy. These cognitive frames in which Rosen moved could also hamper actions, as the closeness he put on display came to harm his and the German position in

4 al-e Ahmad, *Gharbzadegi*, 73.

Morocco, as French dominance grew stronger and Rosen did not shift gears to a haughtier approach. Even when he knew that on a rational level there was nothing left for Germany to achieve in Morocco but to gain some form of equivalent, he pushed for European imposed legal reforms to at least conform to some extent to the prevalent Islamic ways of life in Morocco. Similarly, Rosen's various encounters with Sufism and Rumi's *Masnavi* left deep if not entirely coherent marks on his worldview, finding in the removal from the world, as practiced by Sufi Islam, the roots for the neglect of the material and thus a falling behind the advances brought about by "European" hard sciences. This led him to believe that short-term Germany should not hedge its bets on crumbling Muslim states – especially as European actions in the Islamic world actively hindered development.

The study of languages was a constant side-activity of Rosen's diplomatic career. In Tehran, Rosen's mastering of Persian, based on his previous studies in Europe and India, allowed him to move independently in a number of Iranian contexts from countryside nomads to the royal courts and intellectual-spiritual Sufi orders of the capital. He continued with his own language, poetry and history studies and acted as a go-to point for visiting and corresponding Europeans such as Gertrude Bell, Andreas and Mann, while engaging with local savants such as Amin as-Sultan, Zahir ed-Dowleh, and 'Emad ed-Dowleh on philosophical, poetical and religious topics, thereby creating the cultural substratum that enabled trust and could function as a basis for common politics. In Morocco, Rosen sought to replicate this approach in sweet talking Moroccan foreign minister Ben Sliman, but the divergence of political interests was not kept together by a shared appreciation of philosophy. Language skills were important in Rosen's mission to Ethiopia, in his attachment to the Iranian delegation to Germany, his more circumscribed understanding of Moroccan affairs, and in his general portrayal of a genuine interest in the language, literature and culture of foreign lands.

Although Rosen would during the war come to complain of the misplaced belief among political actors in the overestimated effect that language and other cultural skills could produce for German interests amid the absence of hard power tools, the *Auswärtiges Amt* sponsoring and drawing on the applied knowledge coming out of the SOS did provide German foreign affairs in some instances with the tools for easy approach that were convertible into political advantage. But the tendency to generalise all of the Orient by many diplomats, politicians, and the press created exaggerated expectations of the still relatively few so-called Orient experts, who really only knew a few places intimately. During the war the need for such experts grew exponentially, opening up career and adventure possibilities for people with relatively little understanding of the com-

plex cultures and societies between Fez and Bengal. Already such people as the well-versed Rosen and Oppenheim could not see it all and anchored their estimations of culture, society and politics in drastically different starting points.

Similar to his stay at the viceregal court of the Dufferins in India, Rosen pursued knowledge in highly political environments in Beirut, Tehran, Baghdad and Jerusalem. This same knowledge allowed him to distinguish himself with his superiors and provided his entry ticket to the centre of foreign affairs in Berlin, as Germany began to pursue its foreign interests more globally under Bülow. Nevertheless, many of Rosen's resulting knowledge productions went contrary to dominant European discourses, the *Indar Sabha* so much so that it was ignored until Indian scholars rediscovered it. Rosen's translation of the *Ruba'iyat* of Omar Khayyam equally introduced a new academic dimension to German engagements with Persian poetry. In lending his political weight to the discussion of the medieval philosopher of "Islam's Golden Age" in Copenhagen in 1908, Rosen also contributed to the push among some younger scholars to move their disciplines from the philological study of the ancient past to literary, political, historical, social and religious studies of more recent periods and topics. Contrary to the continuing prevalence of the study of the pre-Islamic Achaemenid, Parthian or Sasanian empires, the Pahlavi script and the Zoroastrian faith or Firdowsi's medieval epic largely treating on the pre-Islamic, Rosen's subsequent publications on Rumi, Sa'di and other aspects of the Islamicate-Persianate worlds were sourced primarily from his and his father's diplomatic career. Under the influence of European Orientalist scholarship, the upheavals of the Great War, the post-war period and as he grew older he became more sympathetic towards various aspects of Islamic and Arab culture.

Combining all of these productions was the dependence of their genesis on the political and often German or European imperial contexts. While not free of imprints of these political environments, Rosen's productions were neither aimed to legitimise or subtly bolster oppressive imperialism. On the contrary, curiosity drove him, just as much as his wife Nina. His desire, or as he noted "duty" as a traveller, to convey an adequate representation of what he encountered was another factor. Primarily though it was his unmenacing appearance as a German representative in many places in the extra-European world, particularly during his dragoman and consular years, and the positive expectations with which German politics was received in a number of places outside of Europe that made his Orientalist productions far from disciplining.

Rosen was not untypical for Germans going into the world through the British and other empires as junior partners, but without being socialised by and directly associated with the imperial mission and its power levers, they looked differently at places in "the Orient". The Aryan connection that served Britain in

Warren Hastings' words to "lessen the weight of the chain" of imperial oppression, was, for bourgeois Germans, for long confined to the republic of the German spirit and under the impression of their own nascent German nationness, conceived as a more equitable enlightenment project of international spirits. This was not applied across the world, but rather to those peoples marked by the education of the classics or the script cultures of the Orient, and depended practically on portraying a measure of intellect recognisable in European thought categories; even better if this was translatable into "German virtues" like order, duty, discipline and diligence, or an Oriental state could like Ethiopia or Japan point to its own self-empowerment. But the "romantic-medieval" was also something that could connect Germany and the Orient. With the rise of *Weltpolitik* in the last decades before the war and the final carving up of the world by the Europeans, German engagements oscillated between these earlier approaches to the Orient and its own rising nationalist-colonialist ambitions, culminating in a war policy that was imperialist and anti-imperialist at once.

As a diplomat Rosen was close enough to see, read and understand many of the economic, social, cultural and religious factors that made up world politics in the age of empire, but without an active foreign policy or concrete means or needs of political power, he was in a position, like many of his predecessors in his father's generation, to indulge in his scholarly delights from a vantage point of political impotence. Rosen's movement in Tehran's intellectual circles should be understood as that of an equal and in the Safi 'Ali Shahiyya as a welcome disciple, not as a foreign imposition. This political socialisation, from observing the British viceregal court to his political stations in the Middle East, informed his political thought, and consequently, although mainly staying in the language-literary domains of knowledge production, these political contexts were pervasive in his writings.

In observing the decline of Oriental states under the pressure of European expansion, technological advances and the ensuing upheavals of societies and cultures, Rosen's vision was doubly clouded. A constant in his thought was the inevitability of Europeanisation and mechanisation. Next to this force majeure, he perceived of the decline of Oriental states as almost inevitable, as their political set up, social structures and cultures were not primarily aimed at material development and thus had little to put up in the ways of resistance against European forces. Rosen recognised that often enough European led modernisation was but an inadequate foisting of impractical reforms that not rarely had disastrous consequences and further destabilised whatever they were supposed to improve.

Often enough, however, Rosen stayed on the surface of phenomena or falsely assigned cause and effect. The lack of Persian language skills in Konya was

part of the decline of the language across Asia in the nineteenth century, not something inherent to Sufism. The parallel decline of Sufi orders was rather tied to the wider political, religious and social modernisation reforms of the Ottoman Empire and other places, just as the Safi 'Ali Shahiyya was readily adapting its practices and structures to the realities of an integrating and transforming space of interaction between British India and the Russian Caucasus. Perhaps most mind-boggling is Rosen's complete silence on the Iranian Constitutional Revolution, in which Zahir ed-Dowleh and many of his acquaintances played some role. Aside from being rather preoccupied by Moroccan affairs and the Iranian nationalist revolution soon having the rug pulled from under its feet by the Anglo-Russian Convention, Rosen was certainly no revolutionary. He understood that European imperialism was often counterproductive for development, but apart from advocating "organic" development his resigned answer to Browne's question of what could be done for Iran probably best describes his state of mind until the end of his political career: "Oh, what should the politically isolated and from all sides beset German Reich have done for Persia, that it could not reach with its means of power by land or by water?"⁵ Regardless, Rosen continued to write out of these contexts of immediate exposure, mostly literary works that he found valuable and with which he hoped to convey a more positive image of the East that he saw under attack. Partially, the impetus was preservational, mirroring the approach of many an ethnologist who sought to capture the pre-modern before its disappearance, but mixed in was a drive to connect bodies of knowledge, learn from the different and see in it its own legitimacy that ought to continue in its own path into the modern world. Together with Rosen's tendency to flatten time that bordered on essentialising various spirits over the millennia, all these experiences, sources and fields of knowledge made for a relatively easy transition of Rosen to the nationalist paradigms becoming stronger after the war.

In some cases, Orientalist scholarship as such was the object of politics. During the visit of Mozaffar ed-Din Shah, the German excavations of Babylon could have been used as a common ground for the political collaboration the Iranians wanted, had Rosen navigated the Shah in the direction of the Kaiser's archaeology enthusiasm and not confined him to an Islamic worldview. In Ethiopia, Rosen drew on his knowledge of the Orientalist scene to convince Menelik to grant him excavation rights to Aksum. There in Addis Ababa, as in Fez a year later, the gifts the German envoy bore included printed samples of German Orient scholarship as a sign of intellectual goodwill. In Copenhagen, Rosen aimed

5 Friedrich Rosen, "Erinnerungen an Browne," 879.

to leave a good impression on behalf of the German Reich with the hope of improving German-Nordic relations, presenting with the findings of the German Turfan expedition not only a masterwork of the German scientific spirit to the world on a Danish stage but also opened up the research to scholars from across Europe. The congress in Algiers was embedded in a French representation of the continuity of a Roman *oultre mere* in the Algerian colony while at the same time attracting a substantial amount of Arabophone participation. Algiers, Athens, Copenhagen and Hamburg all shared the significance of locational politics by local and national or imperial power-brokers. Local actors or alliances like Melle and Behrmann joined ranks with wider circles of power-brokers to draw the congress to their city. In Hamburg this was part of a long-standing campaign for the foundation of a “cosmopolitan” university, with the city ironically being invested with a Colonial Institute a few years later. Similarly, the *École des lettres d’Alger* hoped to situate itself on the landscape of Orientalist scholarship and in Athens the Orientalists were to adorn the anniversary of the establishment of the national university. Athens’ replacement candidate Cairo equally sought to connect its newly founded modern National University in the international academic scene and show the Egyptian capital as a modern city. All knew that the congresses brought prestige, global attention and were useful to increase the holdings of the local library with the latest research findings.

While scholars could argue that it was absolutely necessary to have a scholar of Ge’ez accompany a diplomatic mission to Ethiopia to catch up Berlin’s manuscript collection to the levels of the libraries in Paris and London on nationalist grounds or excavation rights were granted to a specific country exclusively, as happened with France in Iran, research collaboration was just as widespread; even if only because scholarly circles were so small that everyone was reading and referencing everyone. There were national and regional projects, but European Orientalists set, debated and adjusted research agendas internationally. There was also a significant if hierarchical participation of at least some scholars considered Oriental. Jinvanji Jamshedji Modi at the congress in Hamburg constructed a narrative of Parsi supremacy to Western Judaism and Christianity that actively shaped the way the Orient was perceived and read by Europeans. Nishikanta Chattopadhyaya had been a source for Rosen for his *Indar Sabha* just like Mohammad Sadruddin Khan and booksellers across India. In Iran Safi ‘Ali Shah, Zahir ed-Dowleh and ‘Emad ed-Dowleh were crucial in framing Rosen’s understanding of Persian philosophy and Sufi poetry, just as Mahmud Khan Ehtesham as-Saltaneh was later in Berlin, and later still Taqi Erani. It would be presumptuous to write these figures out of these knowledge production processes or assign them a priori to a subservient position in the chain of Oriental studies. The Chinese representatives at Hamburg may in fact

have been mostly decorative, but the Persian representative Hovhannes Khan actively sought European engagement with Persian literature to gain political ascendancy through culture, just as the Egyptian Zeki Bey practiced a feature of construed scholarship in invoking age-old Egyptian-German ties.

Orientalist scholarship as a modern scientific undertaking was an adaptable political currency that could be leveraged, was negotiated and pursued as a political interest. Political actors, regardless if from Cairo, Copenhagen, Hamburg or Tehran could employ the seeking of Oriental light symbolically, just as they were lobbied by scholars across borders and could be pressured into supporting endeavours by scholars employing nationalist rhetoric. When these processes and interactions between politics and Orientalist scholarship aligned, they could drive round after round of competing and exchanging scholarly expeditions to Central Asia supported by European and Asian countries without any concrete political usefulness (even if destructive to the sites), eventually leading to epistemological uncertainty as to the hitherto assumed origins of humanity in Central Asia. Similarly, politics and scholarship could on a smaller level bring together the international Orientalist acclaim and a diplomat's cunning navigation between the layers of politics and scholarship that were needed to have a professorship created for the "Asian" Iranist Andreas in Göttingen.

It has been contended here that Friedrich Rosen offered himself as a singularly well-placed character to investigate the relationship between scholarship and politics, considering his movement in the realms of government and academia for an extended period of time, in different functions and covering much of what was considered the Orient. The limitations of this approach, as already noted in the introduction, are not to be underestimated. Even though an effort has been made to situate Rosen in the larger forces of history, his engagements with plenty of parts and periods of that ominous Orient were patchy to non-existent. Most centrally, a study of Rosen in and between Orient politics and scholarship shows the tangible interactions between the two realms, how political action could drive scholarly thought, how knowledge affected politics in a number of situations, and how these interactions changed, developed and left behind marks in political thought and practice, as well as in scholarly discussions and conceptions. Following Rosen creates a proximity to a number of places in the Orient as well as in the Occident and shows how these contexts shaped how Rosen thought and acted in consecutive periods and situations. This micro-perspective thus allows the teasing out of continuities, consolidations, changes, recurrences and dismissals in Rosen's thought and action, among some of his interlocutors, closer acquaintances and partners, but also in the larger political affairs and intellectual currents that cut across Tangier, Calcutta, Copenhagen and Addis Ababa.

In order to trace through some of these lines and events of causal influence, the figure Rosen requires one to delve into the pre-imperial Prusso-Lippan age of his upbringing, to perceive of developments and caesurae pertaining to politics and scholarship around him and in his personal life during the German imperial age, and to follow the scholar-diplomat by the grace of Kaiser Wilhelm II into short-lived republican Germany. Rosen's bourgeois upbringing was thoroughly Humboldtian in the sense of both brothers, Euro-Mediterranean and pre-national. The function of the dragoman – his first positions – arose out of a diplomatic tradition of non-citizen intercultural go-betweens rooted in Levantine trade and Ottoman supremacy, and he came to view world politics through the British Empire. His approach to scholarship, moreover, continued to show the philological methods of his uncle and father. Similarly, the German imperial age did not go out the instant the Kaiser, like Khusraw's eagle, fell from the skies by its own arrogance. While many of the political coordinates, principles and procedures were rearranged drastically during and after the First World War, actors, techniques and frames of reference carried over into the 1920s – in Germany and elsewhere. Change was drastic and pervasive, but bodies of knowledge productions that had been produced under imperial circumstances did not suddenly lose their value or impact but were reformulated in discourses centring on nationalist, socialist and religious self-determination.

The pre-industrial environments of little Suleiman's socialisation on his black donkey in mid-nineteenth century Jerusalem and in rural Detmold goes a long way in explaining some of the driving forces, dispositions and skills that Rosen would bring with him into his political and scholarly involvements in and with the Orient. The Middle East was not strange to Rosen but a part of him liked writing Arabic and speaking its languages and his first sensation of feeling strange was between Elbe and Rhine. Even as subsequent impressions altered his perceptions, Jerusalem's 'Aqbat at-Takiyyah with its buildings, institutions and families going back to Mamluk times and before was home to little Fritz. With these cognitive and emotional childhood imprints on Rosen's mind, the microfocus on the person also allows a view into the development of the young man into an ardent student of languages, a teacher of Occidental and Oriental languages and via the British imperial world into Germany's newest creation for making empire linguistically accessible – the SOS. These contexts grew on Rosen, just like his years as minor German dragoman in the peripheral Middle East shaped his political views into an amalgam of impressions, contemplations and ideas that were often contradictory in themselves and in subsequent years oppositional to prevalent German foreign policy.

Investigating this period through Rosen also allows a view into the lateral developments of the places through which he passed. From walled-in Jerusalem,

a two-day ride from the Mediterranean away, Rosen moved to a minor German principality without railway connection until 1890, to the closed off Iranian plateau, Baghdad before its Berlin connection, the similarly pre-railway Ethiopian highlands and the old Moroccan capital Fez. None of these places were isolated from technological change. On the contrary, the changes industrial development wrought on production techniques, labour conditions and socio-cultural upheaval were thoroughly perceptible for Rosen as he moved between growing mechanised and shrinking equestrian spaces. The transformations the nineteenth century brought, equally with its upsides of medical advances, formed the substructures of Rosen's thought, vacillating between admonishment and praise for the romantic-spiritual-medieval and the materialist-modern alike.

Reading these minutiae of Friedrich Rosen's thought, encounters, exchanges and actions in politics and scholarship shows next to the structures of accelerating imperialism and subjugation spaces of relative horizontal interaction or in which the underdogs tried and sometimes succeeded to leverage their superior intelligence or symbolic capital amid the power-political odds. Equally demonstrated are the forces of empire in all their might. Despite all sympathy, Rosen and other like-minded officials saw themselves confronted with an array of pressures and needs that they were committed to fulfil in a European dominated world as representatives of their state, which covered their pay cheque and to which they owed loyalty. And while Rosen was far from the adventure capitalists and chauvinist pan-Germanists, his political thought was not anti-colonialist, even as he banked for much of his political career on free trade for German and global development. As the nation-state system pre-war morphed into a flourish or perish dichotomy and markets and lands for imperial expansion were in high demand, such colonial designs were often only consequential. Rosen may have been opposed to colonising in the Ottoman Empire, Morocco and Persia as adverse for their "organic" development, but the colonial logic was deep rooted in political thinking, and Rosen had no qualms with pursuing a grand-bargain with Britain over Portugal's colonies in Africa to showcase Anglo-German rapprochement or his friend Wilhelm Solf governing over Samoa. An "equivalent" for giving up German interests in Morocco to France was a piece of land in Africa or a freer hand with railway construction in the Ottoman Empire. By the time he was someone on the public stage, international relations were expansionary and this was the politics he pursued.

In contrast, Rosen's scholarly engagements show not only his personal disaffection with some of the policies he saw himself forced to carry out, but also the variegated sources and influences that came together in his knowledge productions, how they evolved over time and how they could be revised and refitted into new thought systems. The introduction Rosen wrote to his father's transla-

tion of Rumi's *Masnavi* was a combination of diverse inputs, conditions and volitions coming together in a particular point in time, producing a text in itself in many ways contradictory, reflective of the diverse sources and ambitions the author aimed to pursue. For former chancellor Bülow the work suitably demonstrated the contrast between a more sympathetic spiritual Sufi Weltanschauung and a superior British materialist reality. Rosen thought to have identified in circular Sufism the root causes for the malaise of the Muslim states and attempted to lobby the Kaiser based on this finding to steer away from a futile pro-Ottoman-Pan-Islam policy. Adventurism and a holy war fixation were not going to tip the balance in Germany's favour. The Islamic world was too fragmented, and foreign assistance was not going to deliver these countries from their decline. Development would have to be organic and come from within. Sufi Islam would have to be activated, much like he had witnessed the order of Zahir ed-Dowleh seek its way into modernity.

Similarly, Rosen's rendering of the Khayyami *Ruba'iyat* as an introduction into Persian culture for a German audience in his *Sinnsprüche*, portry the varying sources he drew on: semi-leisurely studying Persian poetry with Lord Dufferin in India, inputs from across the strata of 1890s Iran, and European Orientalist scholarly interest merged in Rosen under the impression of professional and personal misery. Rosen's *Sinnsprüche* also shows differences in thought and knowledge production over time, as they were affected by and responding to the intellectual and political developments around. As the Aryan concept was coming under attack in academia but only then gained wider traction in the public sphere, Rosen found in the *Ruba'iyat* an Aryan spirit linked to critical and free thinking, reflecting his own scepticism towards religion. Emanating from the Indo-European language theories of the earlier nineteenth century, Rosen conceived of Aryan original stories that had been passed down, drawing comparisons between the legend of Rostam and Sohrab and the similar storyline of Hildebrand and Hadubrand, as well as the millenarian narratives of removal and return in the Kyffhäuser legend and the Shi'ite notion of the return of the twelfth imam as the Mahdi. Rosen found neither the Kyffhäuser-Mahdi belief in deliverance useful or desirable, but thought they were instances of how storylines had been passed down through the centuries in adapted forms. The Aryan spirit was story based, and not thought of in terms of race or nation, rather connecting Iran to Germany as a bridge which Rosen thought necessary to make Khayyam's *Ruba'iyat* and his philosophy accessible for a German readership. Due to the research findings of Goldziher Rosen came to realise that the Aryan as an analytical unit was untenable shortly after when writing the introduction to Rumi's *Masnavi*. As the term came to be widely infused as a counterpoint to the despised Semite in post-war Germany and Rosen himself came under anti-semitic

attacks, he removed the Aryan in the reworked edition of 1929. But with five editions in the public domain that introduced Khayyam as Aryan, the notion persisted and found entry in new explanatory frameworks between Germany, Iran and India. Similarly, the re-discovery of Rosen's work on the *Indar Sabha* by Indian scholars in the 1920s would see his work find reception in the different emerging historiographies of the subcontinent well into the twenty-first century.

Illustrating the persistence of the intellectual labours from the age of German empire, Rosen's life between Orient politics and scholarship sheds a light on the *longue durée* of thought and poetic productions and how they were integrated and adapted from one period and place into another, taking on new meanings and exerting changing measures of impact. For Sadeq Hedayat it was Rosen's Khayyam as "Aryan in Semitic vest" that rang true to the anti-Islamic and anti-Arab tendencies in much Iranian thought at the time. Moving away from similar chauvinist tendencies while in 1920s Berlin, the student of natural sciences Taqi Erani found in Omar Khayyam's mathematical and philosophical treatises sources for creating a new materialist Iran – a desire that Rosen was only too glad to support. In the library of Zahir ed-Dowleh and the philosophical circles of 1890s Tehran Rosen had engaged with philosophical poetry, shaping his thought to the extent that he would find Sa'di's *Gulistan* a fitting instance to illuminate post-Versailles European politics. Radiating back to Iran, in Weimar Germany Rosen came to facilitate and contribute to the whirlwind of intellectual labours of the Iranian circles around Berlin's Kaviani publishing house. As technological advances were rapidly introduced to Iran and the country moved from Qajar dynastical rule via parliamentarianism to Pahlavi authoritarianism, Rosen's view of Iran remained firmly rooted in 1890s Iran. Writing more than twenty years after he had last seen Iran and under the impression of Iranian exile discussions, Rosen's voice called to preserve and develop what he found to be organically Iranian, between Sufism, philosophy, science, religious theatre and time and again poetry. Equally under the impression of the rambunctious German democracy he sought as a model for a "finer" state of things an imagined past that brought together scholarship, politics and religion in a Sufi ruled Safavid Iran, where the people were sensibly cared for by its rulers and society was permeated by scholarship. As the Iranians of 1920s Berlin were reconfiguring their ideologies to answer the challenges of the new era of self-determination, the intellectual labours of Rosen that had sprung from the political and scholarly contexts of the time of German empire and from the pre-German knowledge-seeking of his Lippan father were integrated into modern Iranian nation-making.

Criticised for leaving out German Orientalism the issue with Edward Said's *Orientalism* is not only an omission of a national facet of Orientalism among

many. Along the various cross-European engagements of Rosen's Orient scholarship, this study has shown that by leaving out the central Germans but also the Russians, the Danes, the Hungarians, the Dutch, the Italians and so on, the most significant part of an integrated scholarly sphere of discourse – with all its political connections and contestations – is ignored: its international character. In its interactions with Orient politics the scholarship investigated here, even if understood in a broader sense of knowledge productions that go beyond philological fidgeting, offers a vastly more variegated interrelation of knowledge and power than to substantiate the view of a simple continuous disciplining of an exotic other. Out of a particular set of contemporary circumstances in American politics and political developments in the Middle East, Said observed in the twentieth century a continuation of Franco-British Orientalism accompanying imperial hegemony to the United States with “the menace of *jihad*” ever lurking behind.⁶ The political and intellectual labours and relations of Friedrich Rosen suggest that these trajectories of knowledge production amid changing geo-strategic power constellations were neither as exclusively marching hand in hand from empire to empire, nor was there a divide so pronounced between “Orient” and “Occident” that would warrant saying with Rudyard Kipling “never the twain shall meet”. Amid the very real horrific excesses of empire and the no less bloody following “age of extremes”, for better or worse the twain did meet and entangle.

The intellectual labours of the age of empire lived on, recurring in new forms and significations. Formally and formatively established during the age of global integration German-Iranian, German-Ottoman, German-Indian and German-Ethiopian relations elicit their own afterlives, interpretations and re-inventions. The Khayyami *Ruba'iyat*, the spiritual and philosophical wisdom of Rumi, and Amanat's *Indar Sabha* continue to evoke contrasting intensities and types of interest, and with some of the topics and episodes investigated in this study sounding eerily familiar today, the 1894 *Introduction to Historical Poetics* by the literary theorist Alexander Veselovsky may offer elucidation:

Popular memory has preserved sediments of images, plots, and types, which were once alive, evoked by a famous individual's activity, by an event or an anecdote that excited interest and took possession of sentiment and fantasy. These plots and types were generalised, the notion of particular individuals and facts could fade, leaving behind only common schemas and outlines. These exist in a dark, hidden region of our consciousness, like much that we've undergone and experienced, apparently forgotten, but then they suddenly overwhelm us as an inexplicable revelation... old images, echoes of images, suddenly appear

6 Said, *Orientalism*, 287.

when a popular-poetic demand has arisen, in response to an urgent call of the times. In this way popular legends recur; in this way, in literature, we explain the renewal of some plots, whereas others are apparently forgotten... In our poetic language, and not only in turns of phrase, but also in images, a gradual series of extinctions occurs, even as much is being resurrected for new use... other images and similes are still in circulation, hackneyed, but comprehensible; it appears that they bind us like the fragments of musical phrases that memory has made our own, or like a familiar rhyme, but at the same time they incessantly elicit new suggestions and intellectual work on our side.

Veselovsky adds:

It appears that this alternating renewal of plots is not always a response to the organic demands of societal-poetic development. A talented poet may happen upon this or that motif accidentally, provoke imitation, and create a school that will follow in his tracks without responding to these demands, sometimes even going at cross-purposes to them.⁷

Faith, organised and private religious practice and teaching or the adaptation and remodulation of the sacred in non-religious contexts or secularised forms were not what this study of Friedrich Rosen's life between Orient politics and scholarship set out to investigate, but such matters pervade many aspects here discussed. As the chapter on the holy war question during the war has shown most poignantly, the sacrilisation of war was not confined to an extra-European Orient, nor was this a special German travesty. As jihad was secularised in total war, so were millenarian expectations concocted into European mobilisation efforts and war sacrilised as a holy national exertion. Similarly, the gatherings of eminent Orientalist scholars cannot be limited to sober affairs entirely submissive to disinterested, rational-critical methodology, or as merely in the closed grasp of politics. With their tools of philology dissecting and categorising an Oriental and often religious past they sought ways that would point to the origins of humanity. Not only was the notion of *ex Oriente lux* too reminiscent of other modes of seeking "the light", but the way in which the cup of enlightenment travelled from congress to congress held notions that were not only indicative of mere decorative adaptation of religious rituals for secular practices.

The expectation of finding something great and greater than themselves was heartfelt, but this is not to say that material decoration with religion did not take place. The botched *fatiha* on the entrance card in Hamburg demonstrated how such material adornment could go wrong. Pastor Behrmann's phrasing of the or-

⁷ Alexander Veselovsky, "From the Introduction to Historical Poetics. Questions and Answers (1894)," in *Persistent Forms. Explorations in Historical Poetics*, Ilya Kliger and Boris Maslov (New York: Fordham University Press, 2016), 58–61.

ganiser's apology in terms of a jahili, an ignoramus or someone from the pre-Islamic period, asking the ulema, scholars or those with knowledge of religious law, for forgiveness showcased how some savants were intimately tied to and hoped to do justice to their fields of inquiry.

These dimensions of religion and belief also reached into inter-governmental affairs as Rosen's three diplomatic encounters showed. In reading Mozaffar ed-Din Shah's piety as paramount to his political instincts, Rosen may have precluded Wilhelm's interest in archaeological excavations from pre-Islamic times to have figured as a bargaining chip for the Iranians. While the Christian fraternisation between the Ethiopian and European monarchs had not produced tangible outcomes outweighing political considerations, religious artefacts were exchanged and Rosen and Menelik II found common ground in rooting the Ethiopian Empire more closely still to its religious past through excavations in Aksum to shore up the Negus' symbolic legitimacy. Equally, Rosen's engagements in Morocco were seen through Wilhelm's role as the supposed protector of 300 million Muslims. The green saddle awarded to Rosen and his support for the codification of Morocco's law according to Islamic traditions were contrasted by the accusations of improper conduct against him by other Europeans amid supposed Muslim "fanaticism"; sacrilege for a supposedly civilised European to fraternise with the backward heathens.

Taj's analysis of the interpretive layers between politics and religion of the *Indar Sabha* were beyond Rosen's grasp, but Rosen chose a piece of art that relayed through its poetic forms, symbols and plot lines an image reflective of a multi-religious and multi-ethnic contemporary India that stood in contrast to the tug-of-war between Muslims and Hindus staged by the British viceregal court for entertainment. Religious violence iteratively erupting in the Jerusalem of his childhood and due to a conflicted relationship with his German clergy house teacher, Rosen had formed a disposition critical to organised religion early in his life. With the exposure to the exalting metaphysical discussions of his Sufi relations in Iran and his continuing study of Persian poetry, Rosen successively came to think that development in Islamic countries would have to come from within, a within that was permeated by religious practices, texts and culture. Reflective of his private seeking union with god, in his later years he found an ideal state of harmony of politics, scholarship and religion in Safavid Iran. Having once written that the Sufis saved Islam, it was Sufi thought that opened him to religion.

With these manifestations of belief and ritual more circumstantially observed than thoroughly pursued and investigated, an analysis of how this realm interacted with power and knowledge cannot be offered here. But it deserves further examination as religious dimensions were central to understand-

ing how knowledge and power interacted – and not only as something to be shed in an ostensibly unidirectional secularisation process, with occasional fanatic opposition, but as a driving force, a source to be reformulated, and as cognitive and emotional ways to grasp and cope with existence.

There is then also another angle to the verse of Sa'di's *Gulistan* cited at the outset. The interpretation of the four lines of Sa'di's *Gulistan* in Rosen's translation offered in the introduction pertains to the role of the messenger (Bote) between the realms of knowledge and power, embodied by the savant giving advice to the politician. The messengers in their diplomatic function sit somewhere between, as they serve in a political capacity and pursue power interests, but are at the same time by virtue of their proximity to the foreign state in an advantage of knowledge. They are the ears and eyes, and while only rarely ever approaching in understanding that of locals, the delegated diplomat's knowledge is infinitely more profound than that of the politician at home. As such the envoys gather, process and keep privileged knowledge that they dispense. In the *Gulistan* this dispensation of knowledge is a moral imperative, while Sa'di is all too aware that the ruler takes or leaves the arguably superior advice.

A look at the Persian original behind Rosen's translation reveals what went missing:

ما نصیحت به جای خود کردیم
روزگاری در این بسر بردیم
گر نیاید به گوش رغبت کس
بر رسولان پیام باشد و بس⁸

Underscored in the fourth line, Sa'di chooses for the word of messenger the Arabic-origin word رسولان *rasulan* (plural of *rasul* – unlike Rosen, who writes in singular of one messenger). The word *rasul* is laden with connotations that are integral to the religious universe of Islam in which Sa'di lived. *Rasul* is the messenger of a divine message, often a scripture: an apostle or a prophet. Compounded as *rasul allah*, in the *shahada* the messenger is the prophet, Muhammad.⁹ Given Rosen's ambivalent relationship to religious matters, it may not surprise that these connotations are not relayed more clearly in the word

⁸ Forughī, *Kolliyat-e Sa'di*, 302.

⁹ A.J. Wensinck, "Rasūl," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, P. Bearman, et al. (2012); Uri Rubin, "Prophetic Charisma in the Quran," in *Carisma profetico: Fattore di innovazione religiosa*, Carisma profetico (Brescia: Morcelliana, 2003), 175–77; Wehr and Cowan, *Arabic-English Dictionary*, 391; Sulayman Hayyim, *New Persian-English Dictionary* (Tehran: Librairie-imprimerie Béroutkhim, 1934), 936.

“Bote”. Rosen’s secular reading was, however, not fraudulent, but merely reflective of his role as translator, imbuing the German rendering with one meaning out of several possibilities. A more religiously explicit translation would sound as misplaced in German as it would in English. For Sa’di the choice of the word “rasul” offered the possibility to cloak himself in ambiguity and proffer his limitations, while relaying his readers and benefactors to Quranic scripture: “The duty of the messengers is only to convey the message clearly” (16:35).¹⁰ What people or rulers do with the message is up to them. The implicit comparison in Sa’di’s verse may sound cheeky or blasphemous, but it mirrors a deeply religious worldview in which Sa’di compared his own moral Islamic stance in advising the rulers of the day to that of the prophet Muhammad in confronting the pre-Islamic Sasanian rulers of Iran and served the poet to threaten his masters with retribution in the afterlife, if their rule was not just.¹¹ After this last verse of the *Gulistan*, Sa’di continues in prose by asking his readers to beg God for mercy for the author and forgiveness for the scribe, who copied the manuscript, to signify his fallibility and his writing’s imperfection. In Rosen’s *Ratgeber* the enumeration of author and scribe is followed by an asterisk that refers to the footnote: “Und für den Übersetzer!”¹²

10 Rubin, “Prophetic Charisma in the Quran,” 175–77, 188.

11 Fragner, *Persophonie*, 49; Alireza Shomali and Mehrzad Boroujerdi, “On Sa’di’s *Treatise on Advice to the Kings*,” in *Mirror for the Muslim Prince. Islam and the Theory of Statecraft*, Mehrzad Boroujerdi (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2013), 46–53.

12 “And for the translator!” Friedrich Rosen, *Saadis Ratgeber*, 142.

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Acknowledgements

This book has been in the making since 2012, when I first stumbled upon Friedrich Rosen's *Oriental Memories of a German Diplomatist* – just as the Arab Spring took a definite turn for the worse, amid the reactionary beat down on those seeking freedom from persecution, civil liberties and social justice. Since then the world has had to grapple with the horrors of the Islamic State, has witnessed the unprecedented flight of millions of people seeking safety and a decent life, and has seen the rise of the far-right and “lone wolves”. As it has become commonplace to hear echoes of the last turn of the century in today's accelerating world of novel information technologies, changing patterns of media usage and instantaneous travel amid an arguably integrating world economy, these were some of the conditions of resonance under which I looked back at the interactions of power and knowledge during the life and times of Friedrich Rosen.

My work on this Orientalist and German foreign minister, who I had never heard of before, was further driven and sustained by my personal encounters and experiences, which I often found reminiscent of what he wrote about in his memoirs. When I was welcomed by a bus boy in a hotel in Qom in the middle of the night as his Aryan brother, I was stunned. While buying wool in the bazaar of Shiraz, the salesman greeted me as a compatriot of Goethe, that twin in spirit of Hafez. And in Tehran I was pleasantly surprised to talk with librarians, archivists and booksellers about the oeuvre of Friedrich Nietzsche, Niklas Luhmann and Heinrich Böll. Time and again when in Iran, but also in India, Egypt or the Fertile Crescent, moods visibly lifted as soon as it became clear that I was neither British nor American and uttered the words “from Germany”. But Germany was not only “good”, because of orderliness, efficiency, Mercedes cars and such fantastic football players as Lukas Podolski. As a student of al-Azhar University in Cairo explained to me, the continuing positive connotations Adolf Hitler carried in Egypt stemmed from a common belief among the generation of his elders that Germany had marched on Egypt to liberate the Muslim nation from British imperialism, because Hitler had secretly converted to Islam. Little did I know then that in the Carpet Museum of Iran in Mashhad hangs between woven depictions of Mecca and Medina a life size carpet of Kaiser Wilhelm II that points beyond the all too frequent reduction of German-Islamic encounters to the transfer of Nazi evils.

At a lecture on Jewish Orientalism by Susannah Heschel at the Einstein Forum in Potsdam, I began to realise that I was also shaped by another tradition. Before I moved to Egypt my father, of blessed memory, had given me an essay his

father had written in the 1920s on the “Jewish fate” of the Silesian physician Eduard Schnitzer, who converted to Islam in the Ottoman Empire and became as Emin Pasha the governor of the Egyptian-Sudanese province of Equatoria at the time of the Sudanese Mahdiyya. In Potsdam, Heschel evoked how the Hungarian Orientalist Ignaz Goldziher prostrated himself in prayer at al-Azhar at a similar time and felt that he found in Islam a living Judaism that no longer existed in Europe. I smiled as I was reminded of the excitement and wonder I had experienced, when I had read Goldziher’s books on Islam years earlier in Jerusalem. Studying Islamic and Middle Eastern studies at this originally so very German-Jewish Hebrew University, Goldziher was still the introductory reading to Islam.

It made sense then, when a community leader of Cairo’s large Sudanese refugee population – who incidentally went by the first name as me – suggested that I should visit Sudan to learn how Islam functions on the borders of the Islamic world, as it interacted with other belief systems. Ameer explained to me the biblical family ties between the kingdom of Kush and Israel and that many Sudanese refugees projected onto Israel the vision that this nation arising out of the human ashes of the Holocaust would surely understand their plight as they fled the regime of Omar Bashir. Another door was opened to me by an elderly lady from Iraq on the outskirts of Cairo. During the time of the Iraqi monarchy she married an Iranian man, who had studied engineering in cosmopolitan Alexandria. For changing reasons she and her husband suffered repeated persecution by the subsequent Iraqi regimes. With the birthday celebrations of Queen Elizabeth flickering on the television in her home, she bemoaned that the Jews, who had been her neighbours and playmates when she was a little girl, had been compelled to flee Baghdad.

With Friedrich Rosen I also reacquainted myself with Germany and Europe. I talked with people, who stemmed from India, the Middle East and East Africa, about subjects such as Indian theatre, Iranian poetry, Ethiopian archaeology and no longer so distant lands. At a social event of the German foreign ministry a long-standing journalist reflected with doubt, if he had ever managed to adequately portray Middle Eastern politics, culture and society to Germans “at home”. I celebrated Nowruz, the Iranian New Year, in the Bavarian countryside, I found young and old Germans in rural regions of the country, who treasured the foreign and different, I reconnected in new ways with friends, whose Asian family background was part and parcel of my youth in Cologne, and pondered with others what could take the place of the fairy-tale representations of the Orient at Copenhagen’s Tivoli or in Karl May’s oeuvre amid the so often dominant Islam-terror equation.

Common to all these shorter or longer personal encounters was the individuality of experience, the prominence of attitude and opinion, the possibility and doubt over which course of action to pursue. As important was listening and learning from others, their reality and their truth. Rarely did what I learn fit into preconceived narratives and categories. Similar to the Arabic word *hamma* being translatable as ‘to disquiet’ or ‘to be of interest’, I was time and again unsettled and fascinated. As education is in the German language an act of self-formation that also finds reflection in the genre of the *Bildungsroman*, this process of learning through dialogue and contention with the people around me stimulated my investigations. The between and across borders and the desire for cognition were companions that I have cherished and found also in Friedrich Rosen’s art of diplomacy.

This book is largely based on my PhD dissertation, titled “Orientalist Scholarship and International Politics in the Age of German Empire. Life, Career and Oeuvre of Friedrich Rosen, 1856–1935”, which I defended at the Technical University Berlin in October 2018. I am grateful to Stephanie Schüler-Springorum for providing me with a base at the Zentrum für Antisemitismusforschung and her supervision and support throughout the years. I am further indebted to Jan Rüger, who arranged for me to spend some time at Birkbeck College and whose continuous input was of similar importance. My deepest thanks to both my supervisors, whose kindness and criticism allowed me to complete this undertaking and helped me to improve as a student of history.

I am fortunate to have found in the descendants of the extended family of Friedrich Rosen generous and considerate supporters of my research. Nina Booth, Henry Roche, Georg Rosen, Isabelle Rosen, and Johanna Weiske welcomed me in their homes, granted me access to their private collections, shared their memories and took an interest in locating their family stories in a wider historical context through my work. A fond memory will always be the openness with which Agnes Stache-Weiske first invited me to visit her home and provided me with her great-grandfather’s letters, notebooks, photos, paintings and library. I treasure her constant support and I thank her for encouraging me to travel to Iran.

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